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Zelda 64: First Hands-On Preview Inside

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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY™

First Info: 007 Leaps To PlayStation

10 BEST Multiplayer GAMES

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Tonic Trouble • Chameleon Twist
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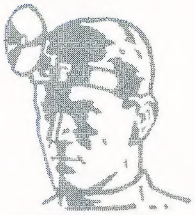
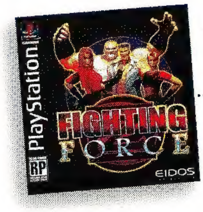


Read this while you still have time to save a life.

Gamer First Aid

1. Stop the game.
2. Call for help.
3. Act quickly. The victim may faint.
4. Get to the nearest hospital.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EIDOS
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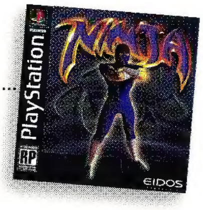
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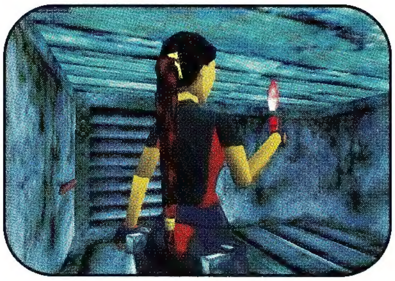

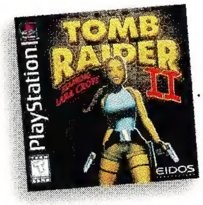
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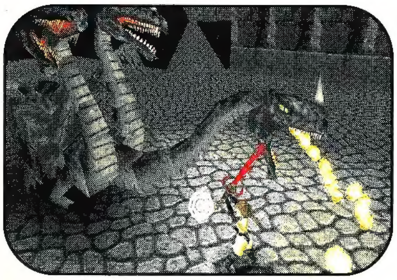
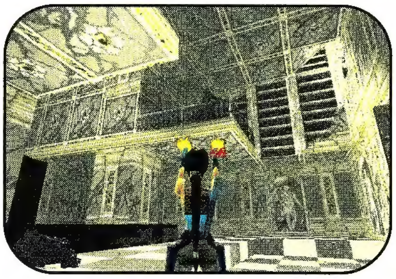
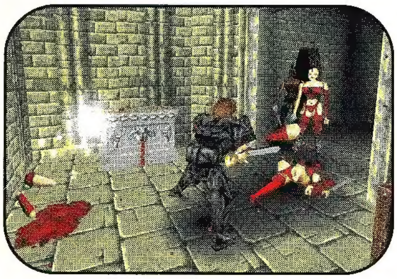
TOMB RAIDER II
EIDOS





PlayStation
DEATHTRAP Dungeon
EIDOS
RP



In most Eidos-related emergencies, your first response will be to finish the victim's game, potentially resulting in the loss of a lot more than a friendship. So before playing games like Tomb Raider 2 or Deathtrap Dungeon, study the enclosed first aid instructions. Then mount them in an easily accesible location near your PlayStation.™ And rest assured that once you've assisted the injured, you can finish what their lame ass couldn't.

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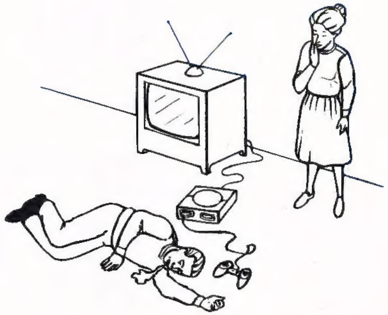
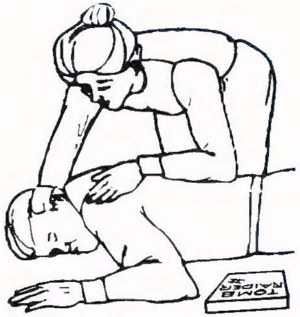
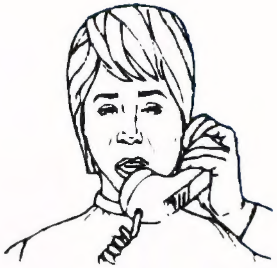
CPR for Gamers



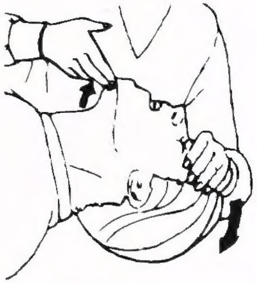
Assess the situation
Is the scene safe?
Has the game been saved?



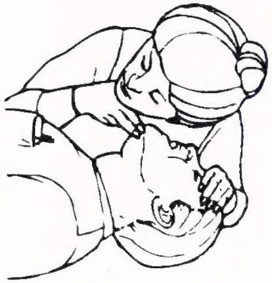
Check for unresponsiveness
Gently tap and ask "Are you okay, dude?"



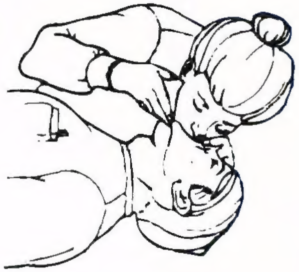
If they don't respond, call for help
If alone call for help first



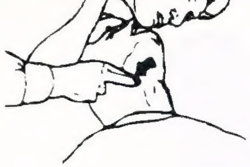
Open the airway
Head tilt, chin lift



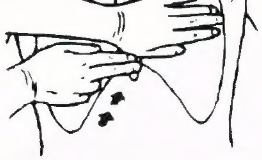
Check breathing (5 seconds)
Put your cheek over their mouth



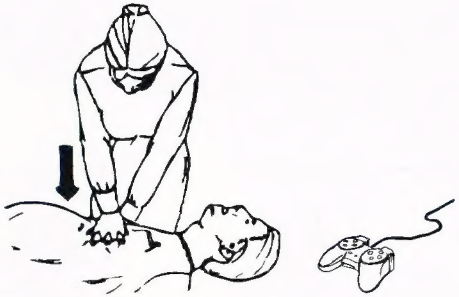
If not breathing give two breaths
Pinch the nose & breath in slowly



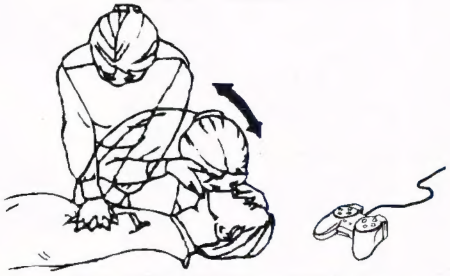
Check the pulse (10 seconds)
Check on groove on side of neck



If no pulse find compression position
Lower third of sternum (breastbone)



Perform 15 compressions
Depth: 1.5 - 2 inches, Rate: 80 - 100 per/min.



Give 2 breaths & 15 compressions
Perform 4 cycles (one minute)

After 1 minute recheck vitals (breathing and pulse)

● If no pulse and no breathing	Perform CPR (15 compressions and 2 breaths)
● If pulse but no breathing	Perform rescue breathing (1 breath every 5 seconds)
● If pulse and breathing	Encourage victim to wait at least 5 minutes before restarting game

*To receive playing tips, call the **Eidos Hint Line (900) 773 - 4367***
Cost of call $0.95/minute. Must be 18 years or have parent's permission. Touch tone phone required.

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Editorial

By Ken Williams • ken_williams@zd.com

There is an important trend in gaming that's gaining in popularity. Multiplayer gaming has clearly become the catalyst for growth in our industry—GoldenEye 007 and sports titles are among the hottest sellers on the market, and Location-Based Entertainment facilities, or LBEs, are popping up everywhere. We have long since zoomed past the halcyon days of dark, seedy arcade hangouts and lone rebel gaming. Instead, gaming has become...*gasp*...socially acceptable.

Things haven't always been this social. In my early teens, nothing like LBEs or multiplayer games even existed. Arcades were seedy at best; usually poorly lit, cement-floor caves where I could escape the pressures of adolescence. The older kids smoked while playing a lone game of Space Invaders or Asteroids, their quarters lined up along the bottom of the screen. Arcades were usually crowded, yet there was a distinct lack of conversation. This was a solitary time; a time to be alone with a single goal—defeat the game—not a social gathering on par with school sporting events and mixers. It's no wonder arcades were blamed for the corruption of youth. Even at our best, we looked more like entranced zombies than the future of America.

And then came the home systems—talk about a social placebo! I was one of the shameless statistics, joining a legion of teens frozen for hours, mesmerized by the dazzling graphics and engrossing gameplay of the latest Atari game. Social withdrawal? Certainly. But hey, I was developing hand-eye coordination, right? In hindsight, I'm amazed the FDA didn't move to classify video games as some sort of narcotic. There was no alternative to reaching that 100th round of Defender. Gaming was like a drug, and I, like many of my peers, was addicted for life.

Sports fans have a name for such an intense focus; I was "In The Zone." The problem was, being In The Zone was pretty lonely. Gradually, more games began to allow for more than one player at a time. It was the start of something big. Then the first four-player simultaneous titles began to filter into arcades and console systems. Anyone remember Warlords on the Atari 2600 and in the arcades? Now that was a game that required some pals to really enjoy. There suddenly was a social aspect to playing video games.

Fast forward to my late teens, where arcades had undergone a radical transformation. Clean, well-lit game rooms started popping up everywhere. It got to the point where a kid only had to take a short walk to the nearest corner or mall to meet his buddies for a game of four-player Gauntlet or Cyberball. Martial arts games required a human competitor to have the most fun. Street Fighter, Double Dragon, Final Fight and Bad Dudes machines were constantly packed with two friends (or enemies) hacking away at each other. Suddenly, arcade games weren't so much of a rebel, loner pastime anymore. Sure, many of us hunkered down at home at night to enjoy the latest incarnation of Mario, but gaming would never be the same.

Today, home games have once again caught up with arcades in embellishing the human element of video gaming. Now we're playing games like GoldenEye 007, Duke Nukem 3D, Bomberman, Mario Kart 64 and countless sports titles, all of which support—and are arguably at their best in—Multiplayer Mode. With the exception of a few genres like RPGs, many games require a friend to realize the full entertainment value. Even here at *EGM*, we used to grab our favorite titles and hunker down for some serious gaming binges, alone. Now we play sports, various fighting games and racing games as a group. We sometimes even visit the local Dave & Busters for merriment and mayhem.

There's only one thing missing in this pleasant evolution: multiplayer RPGs. With advanced Internet capabilities linking computers worldwide, PCs have had a head start. Breakthrough titles like Diablo, Meridian 59 and recently Ultima Online create virtual communities complete with unique, diverse roles for gamers. Whereas before you were forced to be the lone hero, now you can join a party of real friends, slay a dragon and battle the forces of evil as a team, sharing the glory and bonding of victory, and the humiliation and finger-pointing of defeat. Home consoles are the final frontier for multiplayer RPGs. Final Fantasy VIII Online? We can't wait!

There's no question, the latest trend in gaming requires a little help from your friends...

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CHEWBACCA

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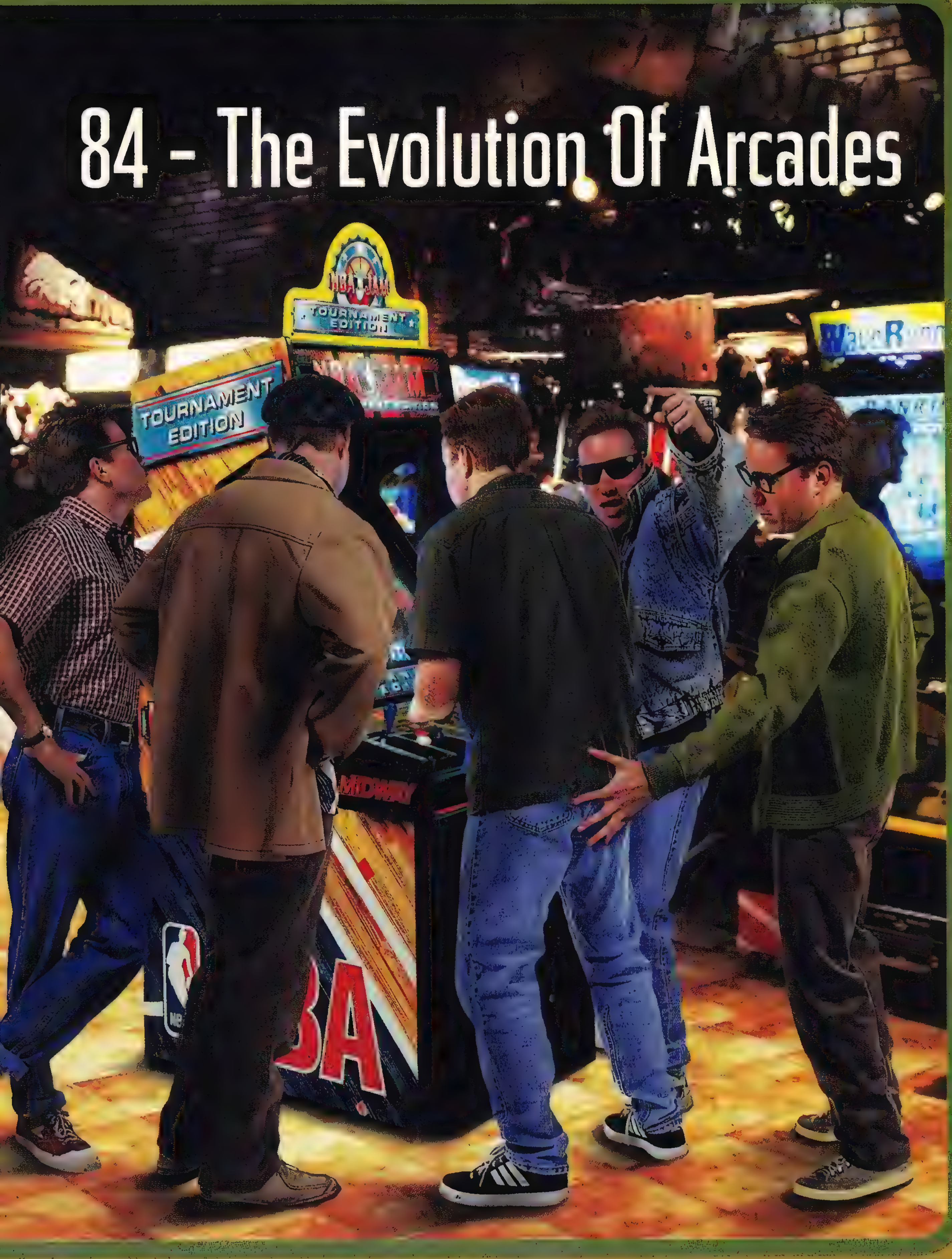
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egm letters

Compiled by: Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Letter of the Month

Growing Up

I've been observing the trend of nostalgia that has been sweeping the past few issues of your magazine, and I've given it some thought. It would appear the top 100 list, readers' responses and even Ed Semrad's most recent column have demonstrated what fierce loyalty so many people possess toward the games of yesterday (and how many others don't). It seems to me that video games, like other branches of the entertainment industry (movies, television, etc.) are subject to this form of appreciation mainly because of the many unique (and not-so-unique) viewpoints of younger and older gamers. Semrad stated in his column how unimpressed his son was with the games that Semrad himself appreciated. His son didn't grow up with those games. Similarly, I didn't grow up watching black-and-white serials at my local movie theater.

Those who don't grow up with certain things usually don't appreciate them the same way. In fact, I'm imagining today's youth growing up and becoming nostalgic about today's games in an era that makes GoldenEye look like Pac-Man and hearing *their* kids say, "Yeah, I'm bored with that. Look at how much more fun today's games are. The graphics are better too."

I could be completely wrong, of course. But the point I'm trying to make is that video games, like everything else, are subject to individual interpretation and appreciation (except for dogs like Shaq-Fu), and while the era many games arrived in is now gone, lots of people still like them because their original charm isn't gone. It all depends on who you are as a gamer as far as many of the aspects of game quality go.

But that's just my opinion.

Ivan Henley—Broken Arrow, OK

Whenever we bring up an old game in fond memory, we're always wondering, "Do we still like this game because we liked it so much when we were younger? Or is it a genuinely good game, even by today's standards?" More than one fantasy was destroyed when we brought out the classics in making the Top 100. We found out some of these "awesome oldies" aren't so awesome anymore.

It's not always nostalgia, however, that makes a classic good in our minds. Games like Ms. Pac-Man are still fun because they were made with one thing in mind: great gameplay.

Thanks for your letter.

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EGM Letters gives you the chance to praise, gripe, ask, speculate or simply reflect. *EGM* will discuss some of today's top issues in the video game industry. If you have a subscription inquiry or problem, please contact our subscription department at **(303) 665-8930** or by going to: **http://subscribe.egmmag.com/service** on the Web. Writing the editorial staff about your subscription concerns is futile! Note: *EGM* cannot and will not personally respond to any letters. We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. You can reach *EGM* by writing to:

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Dukespeak

Did you know that most of Duke Nukem's quotes are from the *Evil Dead* movies? "Come get some," "Hail to the king, baby," are all such quotes. Also, the "kicking @$$ and chewing bubble gum" thing is from the movie *They Live*. Just wanted to let you know if you didn't already and give you a few more reasons why Duke rocks!

vmiletic@facstaff.wisc.edu

George Presard, 3D Realms' product manager on the original Duke Nukem (for the PC), told us that the Duke team wanted the game to be a pop-culture reference fest. So, they threw in a few memorable quotes from some of the team's favorite cult movies, the *Evil Dead* series and *They Live*. Good thing the developers aren't fans of *Cool As Ice*.

"Groovy"

On *EGM*'s Side

I want to let you know that I totally agree that Resident Evil is overrated. In fact, I think Resident Evil is probably the most overrated game in history! I bought the game because of the hype surrounding it, but when I played it, I was very disappointed. First off, I was forced to hear the horrible voice acting! Then there was the storage system, which made me want to puke. Overall, the game was OK, but it shouldn't have gotten that much praise. By the way, that picture of Cloud's ass cracked me up!

Tom Vitale—Staten Island, NY

Heh...heh...heh...he said ass cracked. Well, we're glad *someone* was OK with us not including Resident Evil in the top 100.

Political Turmoil

Your response to issue #100's "Letter of the Month" dismayed me. In that particular issue, you blame House and Senate conservative Republicans for the ongoing political nagging over video games (you replied, "Then the conservative senator/parent wouldn't have anything to worry [or complain] about..." in that issue's letters column). You have put the blame on the wrong political wing, gentlemen. Video gaming's most vocal Washington, D.C. opponents are Democrats, and more specifically liberal Democrats. The whole "let's have the government rate video games" ordeal and its subsequent "Violence in video games" hearings were proposed by Senator Lieberman, an outspoken and extremely left-wing Democrat.

So why does *EGM* keep blaming conservatives for video games' never-ending political turmoil? Perhaps the evidently-too-young sub-college-age editors are failing their poli-sci classes, unaware of the differences between right- and left-wing politics? Why, it was uber-Republican himself Ronald Reagan who once said something to the effect of "If parents would watch their kids more closely and

Video Game TV Show Looking For Staff

Do you play video games and work in TV production? Ziff-Davis Television wants you! ZDTV is looking for segment producers, production associates and interns for its daily gaming show. Only those with a passion for video games need apply. Staffing up in the first quarter of 1998, ZDTV's gaming show will feature competitions, along with the latest previews, reviews, tips, tricks and news in the world of video gaming. Covering the entire spectrum from consoles to PCs, arcade to online, ZDTV is looking for team players capable of all aspects of production. The ability to operate a video camera, produce field segments and direct edit sessions is a must. Candidates should be familiar with studio production, and most of all, must be avid gamers. All interested parties should mail a resume and reel with a brief cover letter to:

EM Capuano
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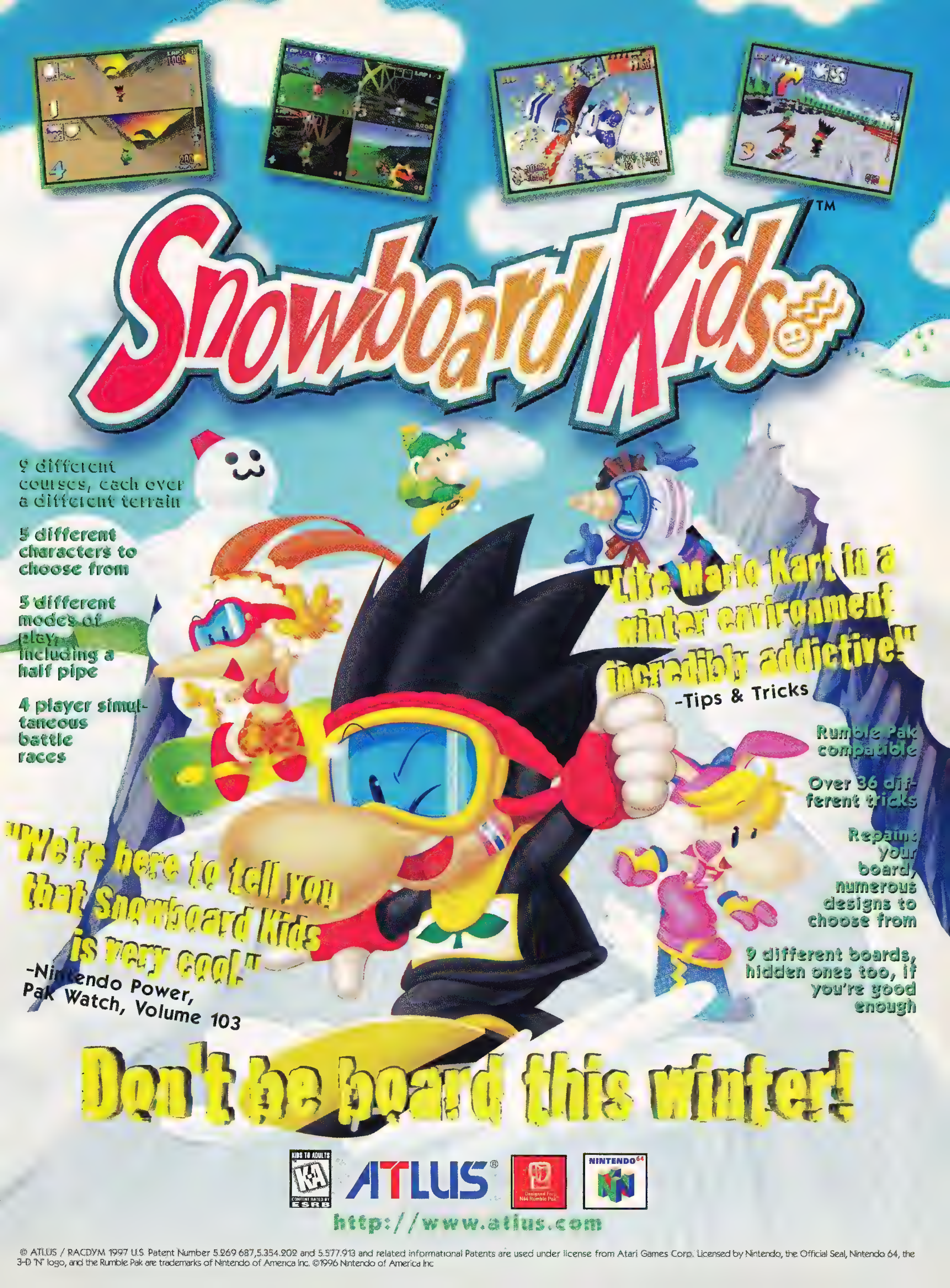
650 Townsend St.
San Francisco, CA 94103



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-Nintendo Power, Pak Watch, Volume 103

Don't be board this winter!

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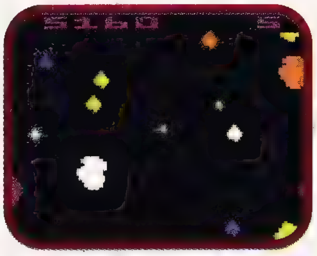
egm letters

intently, there would be no need at all for game rating systems and their like." Truly, it's the political leftists who want more and more government in our lives; video games are just another issue to them.

Neil Johnson—mr.kotter@juno.com

First off, we never blamed any Republicans. Second, if you had any political savvy, you'd realize that the "liberal" and "conservative" tags mean less now than ever when applied to the Republican and Democratic parties. You'd realize that lately we've seen the rise of the so-called "New Democrats," who take a decidedly moderate approach in an attempt to please the majority of their constituents. Sen. Joe Lieberman is considered by many to be the "captain" of this new Capitol Hill crew, and that's why we're seeing a conservative policy—such as the game rating system—along with liberal views from a Democrat. Whew...we'll get off our soapbox now.

And The Name of This Game Is...



The game you were talking about in issue 102 on page 16 is Astrod [*sic*]. I know it is Astrod because you can go to Wal-Mart and check out the arcade file.

Desmond Johnson, Jr.—
Havelock, NC

OK, thanks.

Mission: Delayed, But Not Impossible

I am writing to you to express my frustration over Nintendo 64's Mission: Impossible. Every time I get my new issue of *EGM*, I turn to the Coming Soon list and see Mission: Impossible being pushed back another month. What's the deal?

Mike Wolfe—Indianapolis, IN

We theorized that Ocean/Infogrames (the joint developers of Mission: Impossible) took their game back to the drawing boards upon seeing what an utterly fantastic job Rare did with GoldenEye 007. A spokesperson for Ocean, of course, denied this. He told us the game is being held back for its own reasons—being that M:I contains "revolutionary game mechanics," the game is taking much longer to complete than anyone there anticipated. Right now, the game is slated for a second quarter release, 1998. Hopefully, it'll be worth the wait.

Macintosh Loyalist

I am writing in response to a comment made in your 102nd issue, "If it's games you're into, forget about a Mac—it's not even worth considering anymore." I know that the PC game market is a hell of a lot bigger than the Mac's, but I would also like to make it clear that there are a ton of great games for the Macintosh such as Quake, Duke Nukem 3D, MechWarrior II and so on. I also couldn't help but notice that you at *EGM* use the Macintosh too. On page 178 in your 100th issue (in the picture in the right-hand corner), you show a keyboard with the Apple logo on it. In the future, please think before hopping on the Macs-are-good-for-nothing bandwagon, especially if you use them yourselves.

Lucifero63@aol.com

We never said that Macintoshes are poor computers for *production* (which is what we use them for). We simply wouldn't recommend them if you're looking for a strong gaming machine. That is, unless you prefer shopping amongst the few games on that tiny island display at the video game shop over the rest of the store. By the way, all those games you mentioned are also available on the PC.

EGM—HELP WANTED

Wait, don't get too excited here. We're not looking for new editors (well, not until Joe Funk catches Crispin sleeping again, anyway). We want your input. We want to know what childish antics you perform when you're losing in a game (joypad tossing, name calling, etc.). Mail your best stuff to:

LOSERS c/o *EGM*
1920 Highland Ave. #222
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or EGM_Mail@zd.com with the subject heading: LOSERS.

We'll publish some of the more creative responses in an upcoming feature in *EGM*.

It Takes Guts

I want to commend you for printing the letter from Richard Spoonts, the gay man from Harvard [*EGM* Letters, issue #101]. I felt the mere fact that you let it see print deserves a big pat on the back. Why? Because presently, the world, in general, is taking an extremely "anti-gay" attitude. I'm sure that you received piles upon piles of letters blatantly trashing you for printing said letter. But you didn't discriminate at all, and you let another point of view see light. It's a gutsy move that I'm sure freaked many readers out, but one that validates my faith in you guys that you won't be pushed around.

As a straight white male, I get really tired of hearing others in my demographic group whine on and on about this issue. I don't know about other readers out there, but the "hate those awful gays" attitude gets stale real fast. So another thumbs up to you guys at *EGM*. You could have sacrificed Richard's letter for the purposes of a joke, hurting him in the process, but you didn't, which I think deserves acclaim.

Ira Wells—wells_d@agt.net

We hardly received any letters complaining about us printing Mr. Spoonts' letter. We did get a couple, including one from a father who cancelled his sons' subscription because he didn't want his children exposed to such "filth." We're surprised this family is even reading *Electronic Gaming Monthly*; we certainly can't imagine these kids playing video games. The electronic images and strange noises emanating from the "moving picture box" must be frightening to people living in the Stone Age.

And hey! We're perfectly capable of printing letters without cracking a joke or poking fun of (or insulting) the author. Now...can you tell us what the hell kind of name is Ira Wells? Sounds like a girly name...

Question of the Moment

What are your thoughts on censored "Director's Cuts?"

We shouldn't need to see a Director's Cut since [the censored scenes] should've been included in the first place.
cloudx@webtv.net

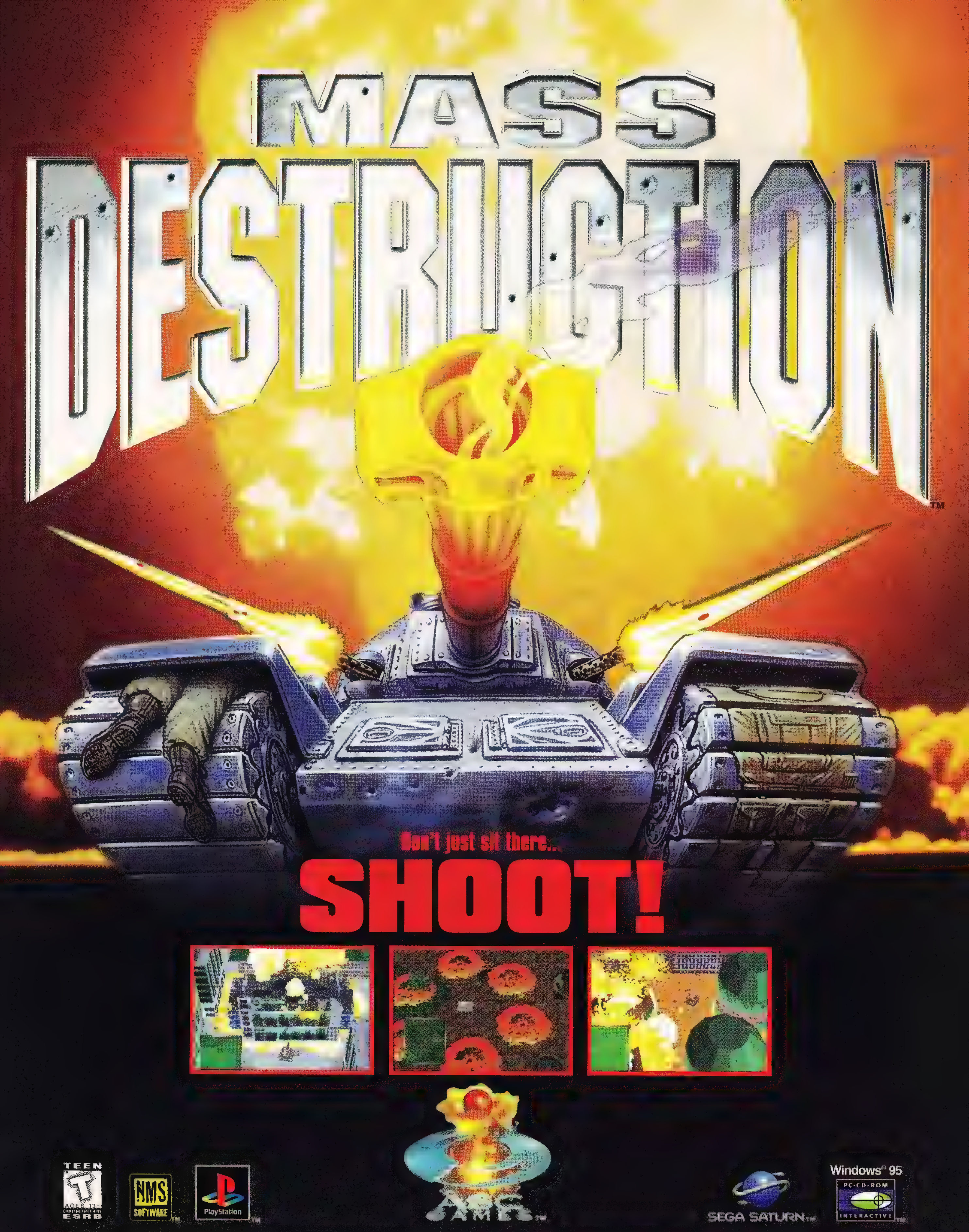
Censored director's cuts...what an oxymoron.
mojorecords@juno.com

Many gamers are getting ripped off. In the case of Resident Evil: Director's Cut, I feel Capcom should recall the game and refund the gamers who foolishly bought it.
Eric_Easterly@xn.xerox.com

Just because Director's Cut is censored doesn't mean it's a bad game. Don't go whining about how the game's uncut, because it's still a great game no matter what you do to it.
happystickman@mail.geocities.com

A director's cut is a version of a product in which the director expresses his/her original vision. Censorship of a director's cut is hypocritical and not at all true to its label.
RJStuff@aol.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment: What classic game(s) would you like to see revived for today's systems?
Send your short (very short, please), but sweet, responses to: EGM_Mail@zd.com with the subject heading: **Classics**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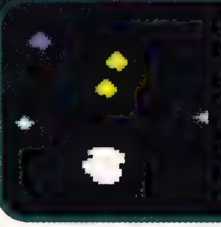


All you folks (look up *sarcasm* in the dictionary, by the way) who wrote in and told us that this game is called Asteroids clearly did not check with this "Wal-Mart Arcade File," whatever that is. So the next time you're in the mood for some classic arcade shootin', go to your local video game retailer and ask to see their Astrod. Trust us, it'll be fun!

Gender Bender

I'm responding to your article about Toad in issue #101. You thought Virgin's Cool Spot may possibly be a "chick." Well in issue #88, page 50 and 51, there is a Cool Spot Goes To Hollywood ad with the heading, "He's Flirting With Disaster!" See? He. He's flirting with disaster. So next time you tackle gender issues, get the facts at least *almost* straight.

Chase Macri—Hampton, VA

HE'S FLIRTING WITH DISASTER!
SPOT
GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

Kee-ripes! Take it easy! Run out of laxatives, did we? The Toad story was done in fun, so chill. Besides, there is more than one Spot. Remember the early 7•UP commercials with Spots running rampant? Well, who do you think gave birth to all those Spots? A momma Spot.

I saw your piece on Toad [*What's the Deal With Toad?—EGM* #101]. My observation is that Toad is not a male or a female. He is both. Science tells us that life cells of mold, spores or related fungi have no sex. Toad is a mushroom, and so are all of his people, right? Mushrooms are members of the fungi family. This explains it all, ya? Oh, except for one thing—all of the fungi family are asexual. This means they breed amongst themselves and are both male and female.

Clint Riese—Hibbing, MN

Actually, fungi is *neither* male nor female, and mushrooms themselves are not fungi (but merely a product of them). Bob Fogel, professor of biology at the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor (and curator of fungi at the U of M Herbarium), told us, "Mushrooms are the fruit bodies of certain fungi. Mushrooms are reproductive structures like apples on an apple tree, that's made to spread the spores produced by asexual reproduction." In short: Mushrooms do not reproduce (and therefore, have no sex). The fungi that makes them do reproduce (but have no sex—they either self-reproduce or match up with compatible fungi—however, they do it "plus" to "minus," not male to female).

What does this mean for our lil' buddy Toad? It means he's probably a bastard child of some nasty fungus somewhere, and he cannot be classified as male or female (and he definitely cannot breed and make other Toads himself). Make sure to check out www.herb.lsa.umich.edu if you want to learn more about the fascinating world of fungi.

Wake up guys! If you've ever seen the *Super Mario Bros. Super Show* on UPN, you would clearly see that Toad is a male.

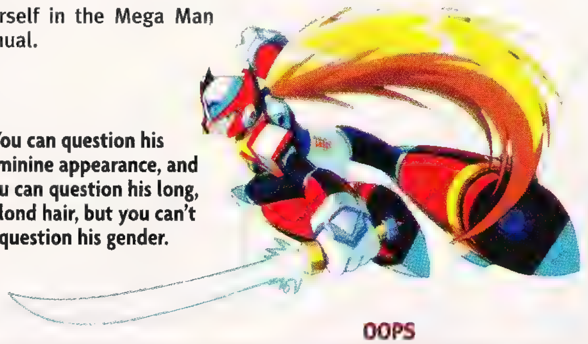
Thomas Duffin—Berthoud, CO

We never caught the *Super Mario Bros. Super Show* on TV because we never seem to want to turn to that channel. Want to know why? We'll spell it out for you: U-P-N. 'Nuff said.

I want to respectfully talk about Zero, from the Mega Man X series. You forgot to include (him or her) in your list of androgynous characters in the Toad feature. I think that Zero is a female hero. Can you solve the problem of this enigmatic character?

Lymari Zayas—Patillas, P.R.

Zero is male. You can read this for yourself in the Mega Man X4 manual.



You can question his feminine appearance, and you can question his long, blond hair, but you can't question his gender.

OOPS

In last month's Video Game Timeline story, we inadvertently stated that Milton Bradley released its Microvision handheld system in 1982. The correct year was 1979. We wish to thank Leonard Herman, author of the book *Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of Videogames*, for clearing up the matter. Also, we'd like to thank Steven Kent, author of the forthcoming book *Electronic Nation*, for contributing to the feature.

Letter Art

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Daniel Rosa
Brooklyn, NY

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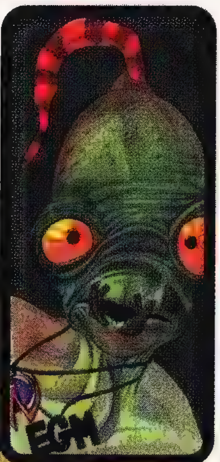
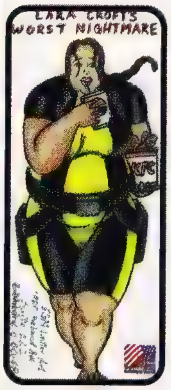
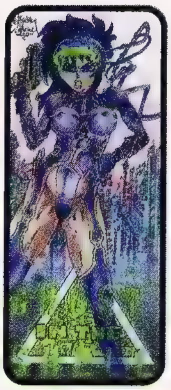


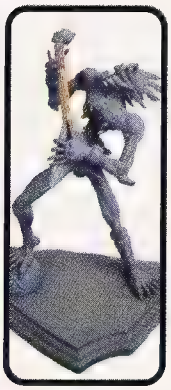
Close, but no controller



Tou Cha
St. Paul, MN



Mischa Watchel
Courtenax, BC
Canada



Max Hagedorn
Dallas, Texas

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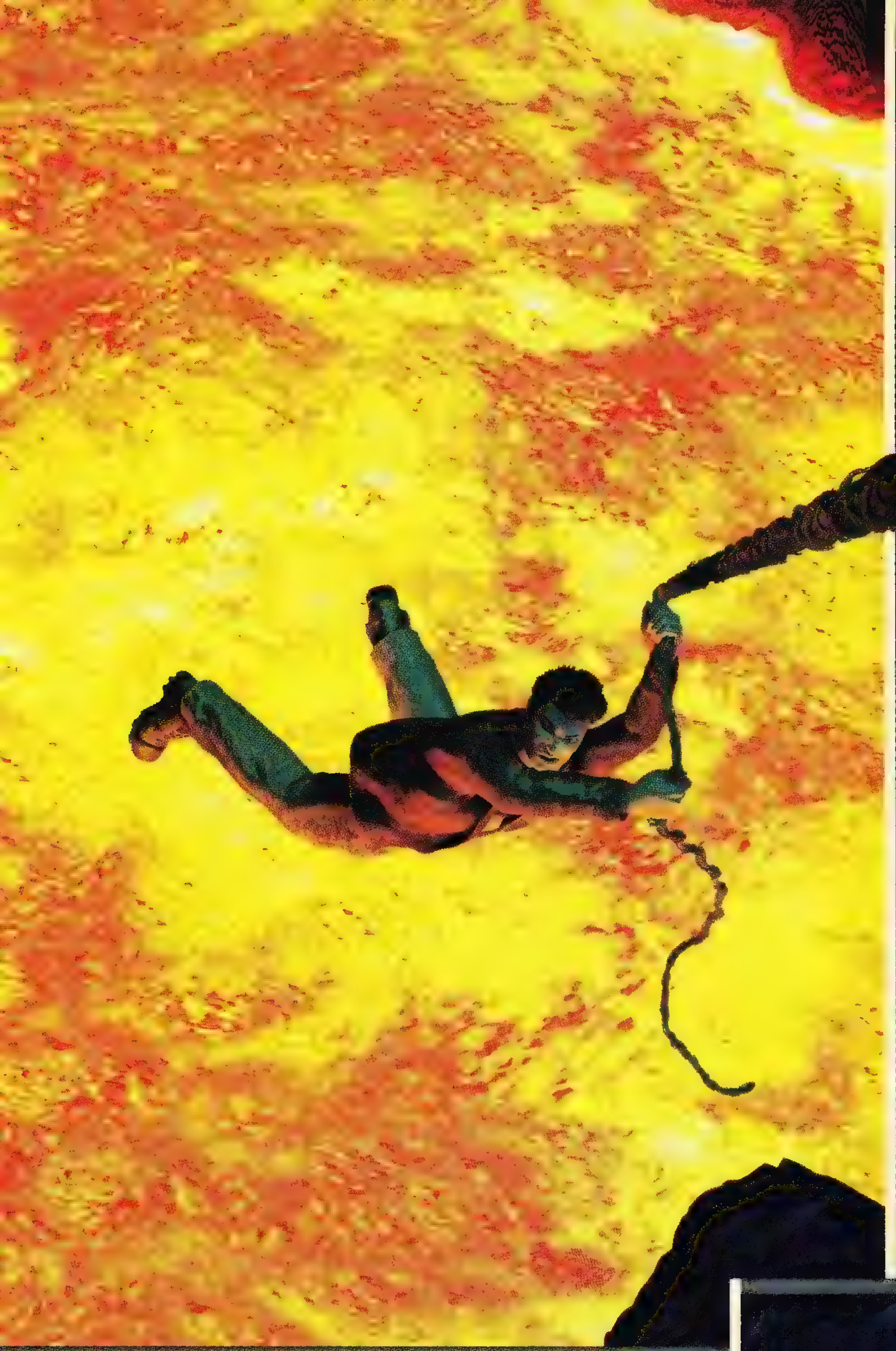

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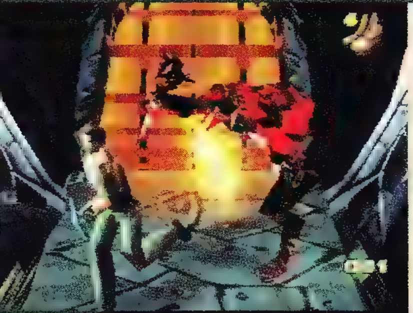

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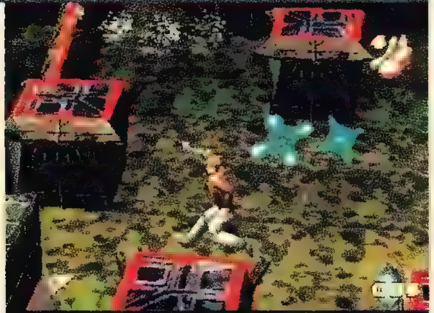

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PITFALL 3D

BEYOND THE JUNGLE™

By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@zd.com

Video Game News

The hottest gaming news on the planet

The Medium Is The Message

Nintendo proves that the DD is more than just your average add-on

As expected, the 64DD made its appearance at this year's Nintendo Space World 1997, held Nov. 21-24 at the Makuhari Messe outside of Tokyo. The device hadn't been seen or heard from since last year's show, and while Nintendo announced a handful of additional titles that will be coming to the DD (and peripherals to go with them), no games were playable.

During his annual speech, Nintendo president Hiroshi Yamauchi announced that the DD will hit Japanese shelves in June of '98, instead of April as originally planned. The exact cost of the system will be announced in early 1998.

But the disappointment from the lack of playable games and the delay was displaced by the games Nintendo showed on tape for the DD—including Mother 3 (Earthbound 64), Pocket Monsters Stadium, Pocket Monsters Snap, Super Mario RPG 2, Picture Maker, Polygon Maker, Talent Maker, SimCity 64 and SimCopter. All incorporate Nintendo's vision of the DD—writability and creativity.

The DD also opens up the option of bringing two separate games together, either by expanding a current cartridge or combining data from two different titles. "You could have a game, and we have talked about this in the context of the SimCity product family, where SimCity might be a disk-based game and SimCopter might be a cartridge-based game that would read the city data that you generated off SimCity and then would let you fly around your own SimCity. Or Streets of SimCity could be another add-on Sim file," said Jim Merrick, Nintendo's project manager of software engineering. "It actually is something that Maxis is working on now." The method of combining data from one title to use in another is also being used in the Mario Artist Series.

Merrick says that Nintendo will not be pushing developers to make disk games over the current cartridge format. "That is up to the developer. We want people to support the DD. We think it offers many advantages for the licenses and the consumer. But it's up to the developer ultimately as to what they choose to write for," he says. "There are some games that there might be a cartridge version and a disk version, and the disk version might offer some enhancements over the cartridge version. So that is up in the air right now. We are not going to pull the plug on cartridges..."

The added storage space and lower cost of producing a disk game will undoubtedly be tempting to developers who have not yet joined Nintendo's ranks. However, 64 Megabytes still isn't as much storage as a CD (650 MB), a drawback which might be considered by some to be fatal. CD audio and full-motion video are luxuries not afforded to developers by the DD.

Could Nintendo have increased the storage space that the DD could hold per disk? "Yes, it could have been larger. You know, it doesn't seem as large now when you have a cartridge game [Zelda 64] that is 32 MB. That's half the size of the DD. But we're really aware of the price sensitivity issue. We feel that over time prices of games are going to drive down," Merrick says. "It still is quite a bit of storage capacity when you consider that we are not advocates for full-motion video and other things that eat up a lot of CD space. The real-time stuff that you see in Zelda or Star Fox is every bit is as dramatic as FMV sequences and still tells the story equally as well, but uses the real models

NINTENDO64

and takes a fraction of the space."

Multidisk games are definitely a possibility in the future, and Merrick told us that there are actually seven different ratios of read to write that a DD disk can have. The entire disk can be used as read-only, and up to 38.44 MB of a disk can be writable.

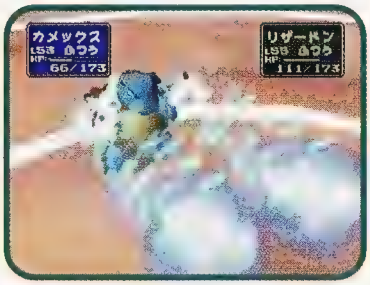
The drive spins at one continuous rate, so there's a trade-off between write and read speed as the heads read closer to the center of the disk. Merrick told us that developers will have to decide how to use that to their advantage.

The U.S. release of the 64DD remains sketchy. George Harrison, Nintendo of America's vice president of marketing and corporate communications, told us that the DD would hit the U.S. after its Japanese release. "We won't talk about our plans [for the U.S.] until E³. It won't go until the software is ready. What we are seeing here is a demonstration of several new products but we still have to determine which one we will launch it with," he said. "We find that we will have to sell the DD to somewhere between 60 and 80 percent of the N64 installed base and that will be quite a challenge. It is something that never has been done before."

The idea that a peripheral could be accepted by over half of the installed base of the original system would be a feat not duplicated in the video game industry before. But Nintendo has already done the impossible by introducing a successful cartridge-based game system in an industry dominated by the CD storage medium. At E³ in May, Nintendo will show the DD for the first time on U.S. soil, and will probably at that time introduce additional games to launch it with in North America.

Check out our previews of Nintendo's new N64 and DD games later on in this issue.

Jim Merrick, Nintendo of America's project manager of software engineering discusses with *EGM* the advantages the 64DD offers developers.



Pocket Monsters Stadium, a DD version of the popular Game Boy series will help make the 64DD a hit in Japan. The mega-popular series has sold over 7.5 million units for the Game Boy since its introduction in February 1997.

Peripheral Visions

The most interesting part of Space World '97 (apart from the games) was the sheer number of peripherals for the N64 and Game Boy. At least a few of these will make their way across the Pacific, so to give you a glimpse of what you might be adding to your GB or N64, here's a rundown of the peripherals of Space World:

The Game Boy Pocket Camera and Pocket Printer capitalize on the current photo sticker booth craze by allowing people to use the Game Boy as a digital camera. The screen acts as the viewfinder, and you can snap and save up to 30 pictures on a single cartridge. The snapshots can then be edited or painted on, and then printed out onto stickers using the Pocket Printer. Both go on sale in Japan in February for about $50, and also come in different colors (corresponding to the GB Pocket colors).

Moving to the N64, Nintendo has a way for gamers to bring portable games home and play them on the N64 and vice versa. Pokemon (short for Pocket Monsters), having sold 7.5 million copies in Japan, is the main reason behind the device, which lets the N64 share data with the Game Boy and vice versa. Pokemon fans can then bring their monsters home, use them to battle using the Pokemon Stadium 64DD game and then take them on the road with the Game Boy. There's no doubt that this will give Japanese gamers a huge incentive to buy a Nintendo 64 and a DD to go along with it (just to play Pokemon).

One of the strangest N64 peripherals yet comes with BioTetris, currently scheduled for a March release in Japan from Amtek. The game comes with a clip that clips to your ear, and connects to the N64 controller. It reads your biorhythms and adjusts the game's difficulty accordingly. You might say that this is the Tetris that gets into your head, literally. The game and clip will set you back about $70 when it's released.

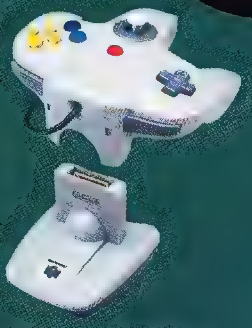
Ever find yourself talking to your favorite game? Nintendo and Marigul intend to capitalize on this by bringing out a Voice Recognition System for the N64. The first game to use it is Pikachu Genki De Chu, starring one of the more popular (and cute) characters from Pokemon. Scheduled for release next fall, the VRS will retail for about $30 in Japan.

Nintendo's also got a host of N64 peripherals to use with upcoming games. The Nintendo 64 Mouse will come in handy for games like SimCity 2000, SimCity 64 and the Mario Artist Series. Mario Artist will also take full advantage of the Capture Cassette—which has video, audio and microphone inputs for collecting video and audio data to use.

There's also a digital camera interface cartridge coming from Nintendo, Fuji Film and Tokyo Electron next fall (in Japan). It allows you to take full-color pictures with a Fuji-standard digital camera and then interface its data module into the N64. The pictures can then be stored in a virtual photo album or used with the Mario Artist series. You can also just retouch them using the N64 then take them to your local photomat and have them printed on higher quality paper. The interface cartridge will set you back about $92.

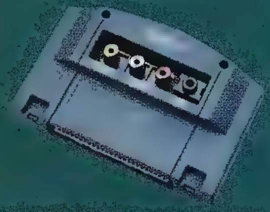
We'll keep you updated on whether any of these new peripherals, all announced at Space World, will be coming to the U.S.

N64, TRANSFORM!

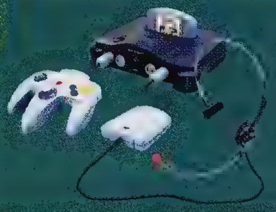


Nintendo 64GB Pak

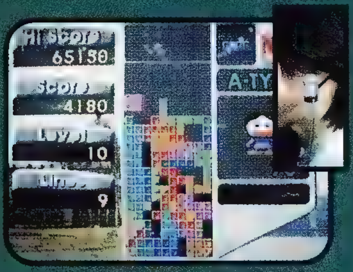
Nintendo 64 Mouse



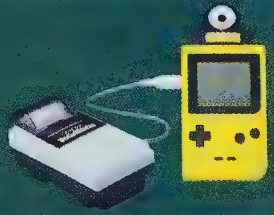
Nintendo 64 Capture Cassette



Nintendo 64 Voice Recognition System



Amtex's Bio-Tetris



Game Boy Pocket Camera and Printer

ACT LOCALLY – KILL

NAME: Douglas McClure

HOMETOWN: Kokomo, IN

RANK IN NET FIGHTER: 1st

DEGREES EARNED: 235,000, traded 27,500 to buy Quake™ in the HEAT store

> ***"I USED TO SMILE AND HAND PEOPLE THEIR FRENCH FRIES, SECRETLY IMAGINING A GIANT TARGET ON EACH ONE'S CHEST AS THEY WALKED TO THE KETCHUP STAND. AFTER I PLAYED OTHERS ON HEAT.NET'S NET FIGHTER, I FELT BETTER AND SUDDENLY ALL THE TARGETS DISAPPEARED!"***

HEAT USER NAME: reniu

TOURNAMENT RECORD: 12-2

FAVORITE SPECIAL MOVE: swinging knife decapitation

TRASH TALK EXCERPT: "Now that's what you call a super-close shave!"

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START-UP KIT.

OTHER FAVORITE GAMES ON HEAT.NET:

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LOCALLY–get the HEAT Internet game network box at your local computer store! GLOBALLY–you can divert your anger off the streets and onto the net against real, live people

GLOBALLY ON HEAT.NET!

NAME: Bill Shultz

HOMETOWN: Portsmouth, VA

RANK IN NET FIGHTER: 2nd

DEGREES EARNED: 197,500, traded 17,500 to buy Scud: Industrial Evolution™ in the HEAT store

"I USED TO TAKE OUT MY BULLETS, AND ON EACH ONE I WOULD WRITE THE NAME OF EACH PERSON ON MY BUS. THEN A FRIEND SHOWED ME I COULD PURGE MY VIOLENT URGES IN NET FIGHTER ON HEAT.NET AGAINST OTHER PEOPLE. THANKS TO HEAT, THE PEOPLE ON MY BUS WILL NEVER KNOW HOW CLOSE THEY CAME!"

HEAT USER NAME: thunderhammer

TOURNAMENT RECORD: 9-3

FAVORITE SPECIAL MOVE: forked lightning kick

TRASH TALK EXCERPT: "Stop hitting like a sissy girl!"

OTHER FAVORITE GAMES ON HEAT.NET: Blood,™ Duke Nukem,™ Total Annihilation,™ Shadow Warrior,™ Postal™

HEAT.NET

TAKE IT TO THE NET!

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log on to HEAT.NET NOW! Through HEAT.NET and the miracle of CyberDiversion,
all over the globe! You'll feel better, the whole world will feel better!

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Playing With Digital Poison

Senators Lieberman and Kohl tell the industry what they're doing right, and what they're not

Violence in video games once again took center stage in Washington in late November when The National Institute for Media and the Family, along with Senators Joseph Lieberman and Herbert Kohl, released the second annual report card on the interactive entertainment industry.

The results were favorable. The arcade industry has yet to adopt the industry-wide ratings system, so they received an incomplete grade. Both rental and retail aspects of the interactive entertainment got high marks for ratings, but lacked enforcement of those ratings.

"These developments are very encouraging, and I want to join Senator Kohl in praising the video game community for their cooperation and commitment to making the rating system a real success," said Senator Joseph Lieberman, who, along with Senator Herbert Kohl, brought the video game violence issue to light over Mortal Kombat's depiction of fatalities and Night Trap's B-movie scenes.

However, even with the high marks given to the industry, Lieberman is quick to point out that violence is still prevalent in many popular games. "The bad news, however, is that there remains a small but significant element within the industry that insists on churning out ever-more graphic, gruesome and grotesque products," he says, citing the PC titles Postal and Carmageddon. "Let there be no doubt: These games are not harmless fun, as some suggest, but digital poison."

Doug Lowenstein, of the Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA), issued a statement presenting the industry's viewpoint.

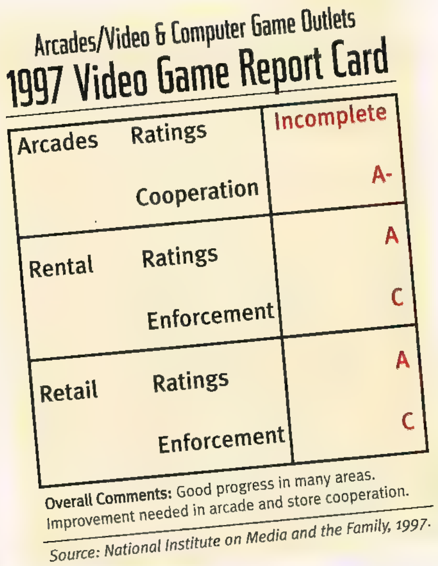
"Video and computer games are used by people of all ages, genders and interests. Some products are not intended for children, just as some books and movies are not intended for younger audiences. And the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) ratings tell parents when this is the case. That's how it should work—consumers are provided with the credible information they need to make their own informed purchasing decisions."

Lowenstein says that children are an important part of the market, but that because 73 percent of PC gamers and 46 percent of video gamers are over 18, sanitizing the content for younger players ignores the interests of older consumers.

Before Thanksgiving, the National Institute for Media and the Family also issued a guide for parents called *KidScore: The 1997 Parents' Guide to Software and Video Games*. The guide rates games by violent content, giving parents the information they need when buying games for their children. To give you an example, Final Fantasy VII is summarized by the guide: "This game contains some violence, illegal and harmful behavior, disrespectful language and has the ability to cause fear in children."

The guide can be obtained by calling (888) 772-2264.

mediaandthefamily.org



Arcades/Video & Computer Game Outlets

1997 Video Game Report Card

Arcades	Ratings	Incomplete
	Cooperation	A-
Rental	Ratings	A
	Enforcement	C
Retail	Ratings	A
	Enforcement	C

Overall Comments: Good progress in many areas. Improvement needed in arcade and store cooperation.

Source: National Institute on Media and the Family, 1997.

Dead Air

The Sega Channel ends its broadcast day

During the Genesis' reign of the 16-Bit market, Sega toyed with the idea of "games on demand." That came to fruition through the Sega Channel, a 24-hour-a-day service that allowed players to download and play Genesis titles for a monthly fee.

The idea worked, for the most part, but there were a few drawbacks. Sega's older, bigger configuration of the Genesis system couldn't be used with the Sega Channel adapter, making it hard to sell the idea to gamers who had bought a Genesis early in its life. When the Sega Channel debuted, it was toward the end of the Genesis' rule, and only had 150,000 subscribers out of the 20 million homes it was offered in.

Don't just *watch* TV, *play* TV was the Sega Channel's motto.

In late November, it was announced that the Sega Channel will stop broadcasting on June 30, 1998. Run apart from Sega of America, the service had watched its subscriber base dwindle with the rise of 32-Bit consoles.

Reportedly the Sega Channel had been toying with the idea of providing its games-on-demand service to personal computers, but with the rise of cable modems and Internet gaming, the need for a system like that through a coaxial cable also dried up.

www.sega.com

Wish For A Mega Hero

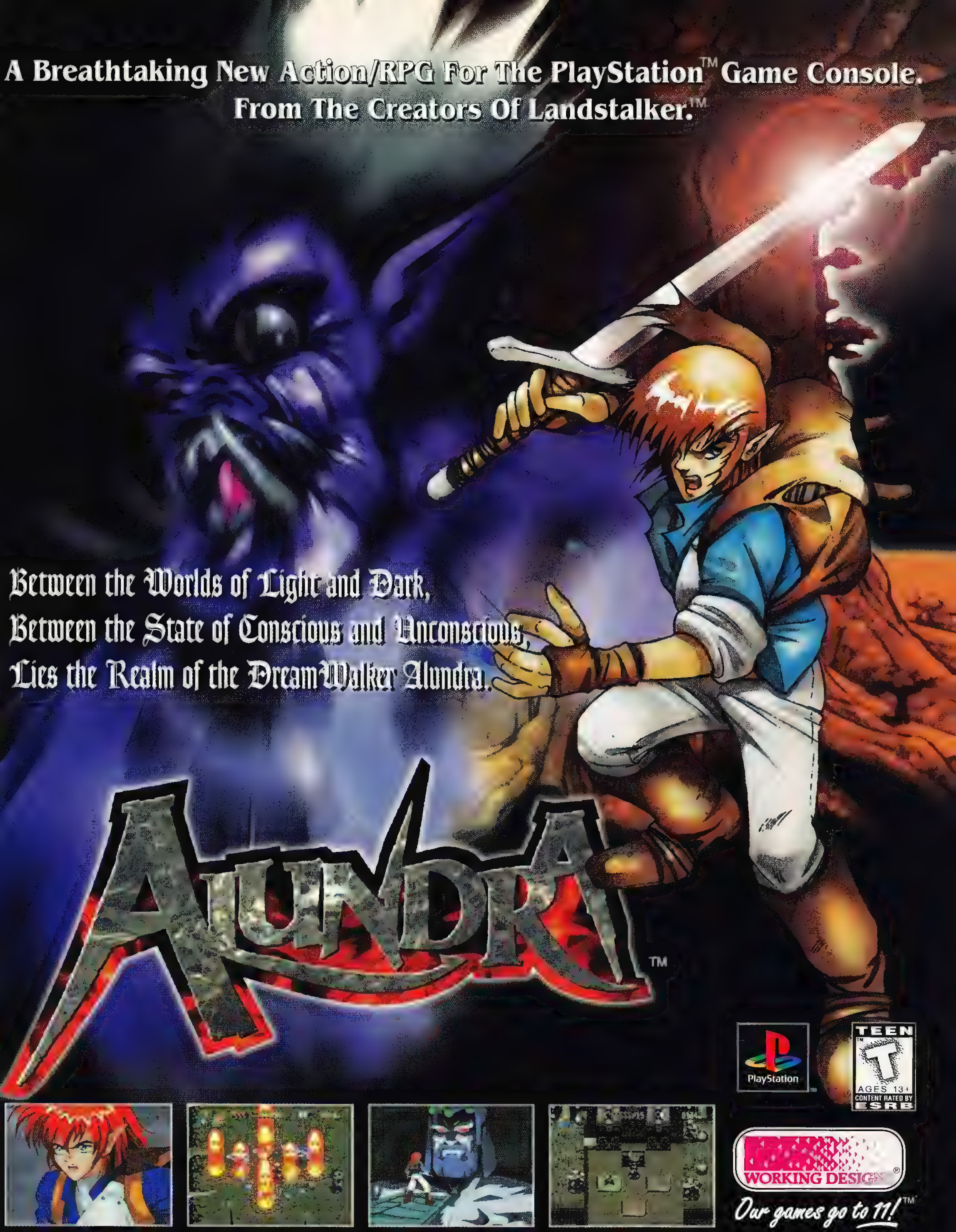
Capcom grants a young boy's wish to meet his hero

During the first week of December, a special wish was granted to Joey, an 8-year-old boy from Ohio who suffers from a life-threatening form of cancer. Capcom and the Make-a-Wish Foundation fulfilled Joey's wish to meet Mega Man.

Joey and his family visited the Capcom Entertainment offices, where he played Mega Man Neo, saw how Capcom's games are designed and was presented with many Mega Man gifts—including a Mega Man cake, a sketch of Mega Man by the game's creator, a Mega Man RC car and video games. Capcom also digitized a picture of Joey's face and composed it into the image of Mega Man, so that he could become his favorite video game hero.

"We really couldn't have asked for a better Christmas present. In a time where violence in video games seems to take the center stage, it's nice to show the world the positive side to video gaming," said Bill Gardner, president of Capcom Entertainment. "Joey is a young man that Capcom will not forget."

www.capcom.com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Tidbits...

Games that Go Platinum

According to Nintendo, Diddy Kong Racing reached sales of 1 million copies in early December. Nintendo says that DKR is the fastest-selling video game in history.

Not to be outdone, Sony also announced that Final Fantasy VII has exceeded sales of 1 million copies. Considering that FFVII is an RPG, this is a huge leap for the genre.

Digitally Immortalized

Ever dream of starring in a video game? Well, with a new contest from Electronic Arts and Mello Yello, you can! EA will create digitized images of three lucky grand-prize winners to appear in a future EA game. The three winners get an all-expense-paid trip to EA's HQ near San Francisco for a tour and a chance to check out the company's future games.

To win, look under the caps of 20-oz., 1 liter and 2 liter bottles of Mello Yello. Each bottle includes an offer for $10 off EA's games.

The promotion runs through Feb. 28, 1998 in markets throughout the Southeast.

Robotech Still On

Early in December, GameTek filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

Wheel of Fortune, the company's first N64 release, is currently on shelves. Jeopardy! has also just been released.

But the project that might have fallen is their N64 title Robotech: Crystal Dreams. According to the company, the game is still on and making progress and will not be effected by the bankruptcy. According to GameTek's Milt Bland, the game is still in development and is looking great, and should be out soon. "We want to make sure that this is the best game we can make before releasing it." If that holds true, then Robotech fans should be very pleased by the results.

ROBOTECH
Crystal Dreams

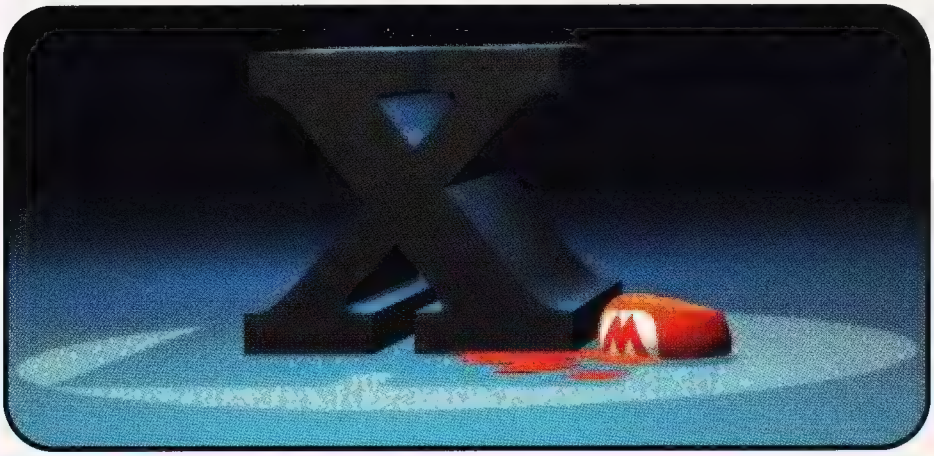
Don't forget to visit GameSpot News for the latest in video game headlines!
http://headline.gamespot.com
videogamespot

X Marks The Spot

VM Labs hopes that their new hardware will become the next big thing

There's a new video game system on the horizon, but it's not from any of the names you've heard before—no Sega, Sony, Nintendo, 3DO, Atari or Amiga. Dubbed the "Project X," this new machine has been in development for three years by Los Altos, Calif.-based VM Labs. Shrouded in secrecy, the company has finally been able to share some of the details with *EGM*.

According to VM Labs' founder and CEO Richard Miller, who once served as Atari's vice president of technology, the new system is "several generations ahead of the current gaming platforms." Miller declined to cite exact system specifications, but the guys at VM Labs stress the fact that this machine will change the way games are made, allowing developers an unprecedented amount of freedom. They would not put a number on the main processor (64-Bit, 128-Bit, etc.), but did say that it's several times more powerful than current machines.



Building the hardware is only half of the battle that VM Labs has ahead. Bringing out a new video game system is never a cake walk, and to handle manufacturing, the company is dealing with several major consumer electronics companies. According to Miller, more than one company will be involved in producing "Project X" hardware, although specific hardware partners have yet to be disclosed.

With the PlayStation currently at the peak of its success, 1998 may be the best time to release a new system. Current consoles are getting serious competition from the PC market in terms of graphics superiority, so it's a good time to release hardware that could once again tip the scales toward the console side. The price of the machine will be a factor in its mass market appeal, and VM Labs told us that their machine will land at a price that's competitive with current consoles.

Once you have good hardware and a manufacturer, the next vital step is software. A steady flow of software is a key factor in the success or failure of a system. While many consider Tempest 2000 as the Jaguar's killer app, lackluster software support eventually killed the machine. VM Labs claims that they have gained the interest of developers and publishers and that software development began ramping up about a month ago.

VM Labs also points out that developers who have seen their technology are enthusiastic. They provided comments from Gerry Blau at AndNow LLC, who said "At first I was skeptical about the introduction of a new gaming platform in what is already an extremely competitive market, ruled by formidable players. However, by the end of our meeting with the wizards at VM Labs, I found it very difficult to think of any possible outcome other than success for this new machine." Previous credits from AndNow's staff include Mr. Bones on the Saturn as well as Ecco the Dolphin and X-Men 1 and 2 on the Genesis. Formed in 1996, the company has yet to release its first game but are working on projects for other platforms.

Japanese software support is also of concern, and one that VM Labs recognizes, but has not yet addressed. A majority of software for video game systems comes from Japan, and while U.S. and European development can sustain a system for a while, Japanese development will be vital to the long-term success of "Project X."

Some will say that there just is not enough room in the video game industry for another hardware platform. Bill Rehbock, VM Labs' vice president of third-party development points out that when Sony first introduced the PlayStation, there were as many as six systems on the market, and that at the time, Sony was new to the video game industry.

Jeff Minter, who was behind what is widely considered the Jaguar's best title, Tempest 2000, is also an active member of the Project X team. As a game developer, VM Labs says that Minter's knowledge has helped them keep the project on the right track and focusing on the right things. Art created by Minter using early Project X tools can be seen at his Web site (**http://www.magic-net.net/~yak/**).

If all the factors come together—software, solid hardware, a big marketing and promotional push, worldwide software support and a mass market price, then the "Project X" at the very least has a chance. We will have more updates on the "Project X" in future issues of *EGM*.

www.vmlabs.com

Sushi-X Files

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e-mail: sushi_x@zd.com (or)
shawn_smith@zd.com
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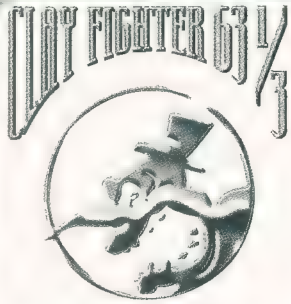


For the Nintendo⁶⁴

T. HOPPY

Hoppy Stomp
Charge ⬇ ⬅ + Kick

Rabbit Shortarm
⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch (close)

Rabbit Longarm
⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch (far)

Hoppy Kick
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Jackrabbit Punch
➡ ⬇ ↘ + Punch

SUPER MOVES

Hash 'N Bash
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Mega Carrot M. Gun
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Rabbit Punch Overdrive
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

CLAYTALITY

Rabbit Out of a Hat
⬅ ⬅ ➡ ➡ SR

Rabbit Pellets
➡ ↘ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ SL

Thwomp
➡ ➡ ➡ ➡

TAFFY

Gum Toss
➡ ↘ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Taffy Twist
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Taffy Spit
➡ ⬇ ↘ + Punch

Jelly Roll
Charge ⬅ ➡ + Punch

Air Twist
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch (in air)

SUPER MOVES

Big Gun
Charge Punch, hit Kick

Super Twist
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Kick O' Plenty
⬇ ⬇ ⬅ ⬅ + Kick

CLAYTALITY

Slap Silly
⬇ ⬇ ➡ ➡ SR

Who Da Man!
⬇ ↘ ➡ SR

Fireworks
⬅ ➡ ⬅ ➡

Splat!
SL, SR, SL, SR

THE BLOB

Buzz Saw
Charge ⬅ ➡ + Punch

Blob Raid
➡ ↘ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

L.A.P.D.
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Dragon Glove
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

SUPER MOVES

Irvine Axe Massacre
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Super Lunge Punch
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Overhead Axe
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

CLAYTALITY

Launch From Island
⬇ ⬇ SL ⬇ ⬇

Da Bomb
⬅ ⬇ ➡ SR

Meat Grinder
⬇ ⬇ ⬇ SL

Hit and Run
⬇ ⬇ ⬅ ➡ + HP (2 inches away)

Pac-Man
⬇ ↙ ⬅ SR

Squish
SL, SR ⬇ ⬇

Knock Off Top Half
⬇ ↘ ➡ SR

Bite
SL ⬇ ⬇ ➡ SL

BAD MR. FROSTY

Ice Bash
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Snow Ball
Charge ⬅ ➡ + Punch

Blizzard
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Ice Pick
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Ice Skate Dash Opener
Charge ⬅ ➡ + Punch

SUPER MOVES

Frozen Frenzy
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Super Kicks
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Super Hurricane
➡ ↘ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ ➡ + Kick

CLAYTALITY

Snowcone Squeeze
⬅ ⬇ ⬇ ➡ SL

Knock Off Top Half
➡ ⬇ ⬅ ⬅ a few steps away

Squish
⬇ ⬅ ⬇ ⬅ a few steps away

Launch From Island
⬇ ⬇ SL, SR

BONKER

Merry-Go-Clown
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Get 'Em Fifi
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Ferris Wheel
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

SUPER MOVES

Welcome to the Big Top
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Big Fifi
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Super 3
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

CLAYTALITY

Drum
➡ ⬇ ➡

Cannon Claytality
⬇ ⬇ ⬇ ⬇

Off the Island Claytality
➡ ⬅ ⬅ ➡

Headbutt Claytality
➡ ➡ ➡

ICKYBOD CLAY

Unearthly Travel
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Great Pumpkin
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Ghoul Roll
Charge ⬅ ➡ + Punch

Bats in the Belfry
⬅ ⬇ ↙ + Punch

Boohooken
➡ ⬇ ↘ + Punch

Rising Ghoul Roll
➡ ↘ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Icky Kick
⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

SUPER MOVES

Evil Presence
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + LP

Icky Shuffle
➡ ➡ ⬅ ⬅ + Kick

Half a Loaf of Clay-Fu
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

CLAYTALITY

Demon Spin
⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ SL

Scary
⬇ ⬇ ➡ ⬅ SR

EARTHWORM JIM

Fire! Fire!
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

EWJ Punch
➡ ⬇ ↘ + Punch

Tumbleworm
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Worm Ball
⬇ ⬇ + Kick

SUPER MOVES

Super Fire
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Stairway to Heaven
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Super Propeller
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Super EWJ Punch
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

CLAYTALITY

Knock Off Top Half
⬅ ⬇ ➡ SR

Cow From the Sky
⬇ ⬇ ⬇ SR, SL

Squish
⬅ ⬅ ➡ ➡ SR

KUNG POW

Crane Technique
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Punch

Egg Fu Young
➡ ⬇ ↘ + Kick

The Crane
⬇ + HK (in the air)

Nunchakus
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

SUPER MOVES

Pork Fried Rice
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Kick

Fu Manchu
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Lo Mein
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

CLAYTALITY

Bruce Lee Squish
⬇ ⬇ ⬇

Slice & Dice
➡ ➡ ➡

Round Toss
⬇ ⬇ ➡ ➡

Pan Toss
➡ ⬇ ⬅ ⬇

HOUNGAN

Voodoo Surfing
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Air Voodoo Surfing
⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick (in Air)

Chicken Baseball
⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Voodoo Mask Smash
⬇ ⬇ + Kick (in Air)

Curse Crawl
⬅ ➡ + Kick (in Air)

Upperkick
➡ ⬇ ↘ + Kick

SUPER MOVES

Super Twirl
⬇ ↙ ⬅ ⬇ ↙ ⬅ + Kick

Super Chicken Attack
⬇ ↘ ➡ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

Graveyard Shift
⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ + Punch

CLAYTALITY

Claytal Hand Grope
⬇ ⬇ ⬇ SL

Claytal Bad Hand
⬇ ⬇ ➡ ⬅ SR

Claytal Bad Mojo
⬅ ↙ ⬇ ↘ ➡ SL

See Ya Clucky
⬇ ↘ ➡ ↘ ⬇

These moves are courtesy of our sister magazine, *EGM²*. Be sure to check *EGM²* out for in-depth strategies and tips for practically every game released.

A History of Clay

Clay Fighter has really been around for some time. Starting way back on the Genesis and Super NES, the little clay fighters have been at each other's throats. Of course, if it weren't for all of the gore of Mortal Kombat and the standard Street Fighter set, we most likely would never have even seen one game like Clayfighter made—let alone a half dozen or so! So here's a short history of clay in video games.

Genesis:
Clay Fighter

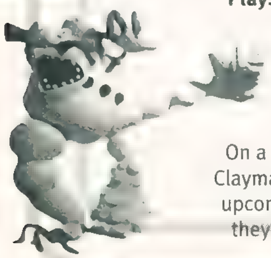
Super NES:
Clay Fighter
Clay Fighter 2: Judgement Clay
Clay Fighter: Tournament Ed.

3DO:
Clay Fighter 2: Judgement Clay

PlayStation:
Clay Fighter Extreme

Nintendo 64:
Clay Fighter 63 1/3

On a side note, we shouldn't forget Claymates on the Super NES and the upcoming Skullmonkeys (even though they're not really in the CF series).



"Grumby" Speaks His Mind

No, not Gumby. Unfortunately, we couldn't afford Gumby, so we got the second best thing, Grumby! Being Gumby's body-double, Grumby has an intimate knowledge of the green clay friend's life and realm. Since Clay Fighter 63 1/3 deals with clay and violence, we thought we'd get Grumby's opinion on violence in video games. Specifically, we asked Grumby the following:

***EGM*:** How do you feel about the amount of violence in video games these days?

Grumby: Well, I think back to when we had to work with the Blockheads. I mean here are two guys who are constantly causing trouble. If they're not hoisting someone up on a ladder, they're toppling over boxes. Even with all the mess they made, we never once had to resort to violence. Sure, we would've liked to melt them down or blow them up, but we didn't.

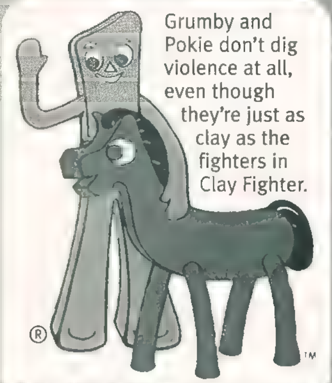
***EGM*:** So it's fair to say that you think there's too much of a focus on death and destruction?

Grumby: I think so, but then again—the more I think about it, the more I wish we would've just killed those two. I mean, what A-holes they were!

***EGM*:** Oh, well...sorry to bring back those bad memories.

Grumby: So, can I get a free subscription to your mag?

***EGM*:** Yeah...uh...see ya later.



Grumby and Pokie don't dig violence at all, even though they're just as clay as the fighters in Clay Fighter.

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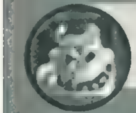
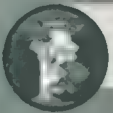
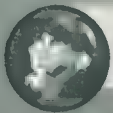
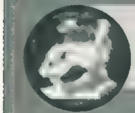
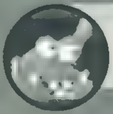
The Cast of Clay Fighter 63 1/3

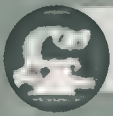

Bad Mr. Frosty
An evil snowman with bad habits.

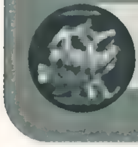

Bonker
Whoever said clowns were fun?

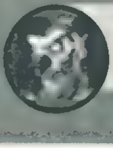

Kung Pow
Stereotypes go crazy with Kung.

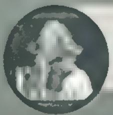

T. Hoppy
A rabbit with a real Rambo complex.


The Blob
The name really says it all.


Taffy
This guy's *really* bad for your teeth.


Ickybod Clay
A typical scary, Halloween type.


Houngan
A witch doctor and his chicken.

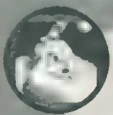

Earthworm Jim
Interplay's token character!

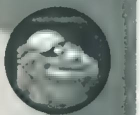
What do you think?

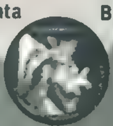
We're trying something a little new with the Sushi-X Files these days. So what do you think? We still want your feedback, so don't stop those letters. The idea here is to not only give you something to laugh at or enjoy, but also present some useful information—be it strategy for a game, a move list for a new fighting game, or other info to help take your gaming further. So keep your ideas coming to:

Sushi-X Files
1920 Highland Ave. Ste. 222
Lombard, IL 60148

SECRET CHARACTERS


Sumo Santa


Boogerman


Dr. Kiln

Point Counter Point

Does Clay Fighter do a good job at being both fun *and* funny?

POINT: Yes, for two reasons. One, the game does a good job of mixing several fighting game engines, and the control is very responsive. It just feels right. Two, Interplay rounded up several recognizable voice actors to lend each character a hilarious goofball personality.
—*Crispin Boyer*

COUNTERPOINT: No way. Sure, the game may be funny, but when it comes right down to it, I just wasn't impressed with Clayfighter as a fighting game. It's supposed to be funny, but that sure isn't worth $60 to me! I'll go with something that may not make me laugh, but will last a lot longer.
—*Shawn Smith*

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International News

By John Ricciardi john_ricciardi@zd.com

インターナショナル ニュース

Yamauchi Says "Stop Playing Dull Games"

Space World '97 kicked off with an address by Nintendo Co., Ltd. president Hiroshi Yamauchi. He repeated Nintendo's battle cry with both the Game Boy (which is still going strong after nearly nine years), N64 and 64DD: quality over quantity, innovation over dullness. According to Yamauchi, Nintendo has the formula for success, and that their 64DD and upcoming N64 titles will revitalize a boring, drab market.

"The recent TV game market is losing momentum. Naturally, it's because of too many boring or too complicated software, that ordinary users can't enjoy playing. Such games are flooding the market," Yamauchi told the assembled crowd.

The DD, in Nintendo's estimation, will change the way video games are made—for the better. "We can't have a bright future prospect for the TV video games right now. This is why we are about to offer the 64DD, to bring about a qualitative change in games. Without introducing unique new ideas, we can't persuade users to accept the 64DD, and that is why it's taking a long time to launch the system," he said. "As for the price, I want to make it as cheap as possible, but I can't say how much it will be right now. We would like to make the notable difference with the existing TV games."

"Now, the game industry is facing the turning point for the developers toward the next year and thereafter. The current TV game market is just the setting sun, and it must realize the changes. I believe the overseas [outside of Japan] TV game market is fine compared with Japan, but we can't be optimistic. It, too, is facing the turning point, I think."

Yamauchi also announced that an N64 version of Derby Stallion, a hugely popular PlayStation horse racer, is coming. Plus, he confirmed that the U.S. will be getting Pocket Monsters (with a new name because of trademark issues) sometime in 1998. At the show, Nintendo offered players a special Pocket Monsters monster, and thousands of kids and their parents descended onto the Space World floor. Pokemon madness was so widespread that Nintendo added a fourth day to the show to accommodate the overwhelming number of eager players.

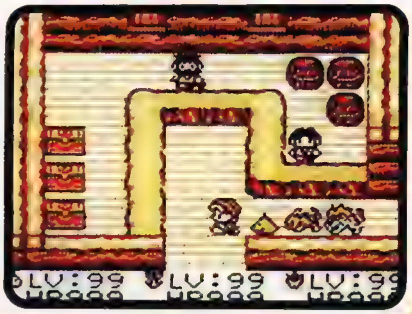
X-Men Vs. Street Fighter: The Story So Far

Sega recently released their new 4 Megabyte RAM upgrade cartridge for the Saturn in Japan. The cart, four times as big as the previous RAM cart (which was used with Marvel Super Heroes, Metal Slug, King of Fighters '96 and several other titles), comes bundled with the fantastic Saturn conversion of Capcom's X-Men Vs. Street Fighter. While the 4 Meg cart isn't backwardly compatible with the aforementioned smaller cart games, it does work with Marvel Super Heroes—and there are several games planned for it in Japan, including Vampire Savior, Dungeons & Dragons Collection and Marvel Super Heroes Vs. Street Fighter. Without this cart, whose U.S. release is still up in the air, it's highly doubtful that any of these games will ever make it to the U.S. In other XM Vs. SF news, Capcom announced a version of the game for the PlayStation, but it's a bit different. The current title is X-Men Vs. Street Fighter EX Edition (no, it's *not* 3-D). Because of the PlayStation's RAM limitations, only one player can fight on each side, instead of a tag team. You'll still be able to choose two per team, but only one of them will do the fighting—the other only comes in during special moves. To make up for the loss, they are including Training and Survival Modes—two options that aren't available in the Saturn version of the game. A U.S. release of the "EX Edition" *is* slated for this spring, according to Capcom USA representatives. Look for a preview in *EGM* soon.

Enix Brings DQ to GB

Enix's Popular Dragon Quest Series Goes Portable

In a surprise move, Enix of Japan recently announced that the company's hugely successful RPG series, Dragon Quest (known as Dragon Warrior in the U.S.), would be coming to the Game Boy. Titled Dragon Quest Monsters: Terry's Wonderland, this first-ever portable Dragon Quest will be released in March 1998 overseas and will weigh in at a hefty 8 Megabits. Not much information has been released about the game yet, but it will be compatible with the Game Boy Link Cable, just like Nintendo's Pocket Monsters, which as we reported earlier has sold over 7 million copies in Japan. Thanks to DQ's enormous popularity in Japan, it's expected that sales of this hot title will burst into the millions within weeks of its release. DQ fans might recognize the character Terry from Dragon Quest VI, the 1995 Super Famicom RPG that was never released in the United States.



Top 10 in Japan

The Ten Best-Selling Games As of Nov. 23

1. **J.League Pro Soccer Club Tsukurou! 2 (Sega)–SS**
2. **Gallop Racer 2 (Tecmo)–PS**
3. **Diddy Kong Racing (Nintendo)–N64**
4. **Einhander (Square)–PS**
5. **Let's & Go!! WGP Hyper Heat (Jaleco)–PS**
6. **Devil Summoner: Soul Hackers (Atlus)–SS**
7. **Pocket Monsters (Nintendo)–GB**
8. **Power Dolls 2 (ASCII)–PS**
9. **Everybody's Golf (Sony)–PS**
10. **Game De Hakken!! Tamagotchi 2 (Bandai)–GB**

Info courtesy of Weekly *Famitsu* magazine

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Designed for Microsoft® Windows®95
PlayStation™
NINTENDO 64
RATING PENDING
RP
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- **Madden football from Fox?**
- **EA, Virgin deal dead**
- **Rewritable PlayStation games?**
- **PS64 dev kits arriving this summer?**
- **Dural release pushed back to 1999**
- **Rare working on new Bond game?**

Video Game Gossip & Speculation

Quartermann

Salutations Quarterfans! It is I, the great Q-holio, reporting live from sunny Foster City, Calif., home of Sony of America's HQ. Right now I'm hiding in the bushes with my Nipponese buddy, Terry Aki. We were just about to infiltrate Sony's stronghold via the air conditioning vent, when we got deluged by a slew of urgent messages on our wireless *EGM* Mk2 satellite communication device. Here's what our Q-sleuths have unearthed so far...

● He's Mine, No He's Mine

(San Mateo, Calif.) This just in...We hear several reports from our Q-informants that Fox Interactive is the latest gaming company launching a sports lineup. According to those in-the-know, Fox is looking to leverage their presence on TV (mindshare earned by the Fox Sports label) to bring sports gaming to a PlayStation and N64 near you by Christmas 1998. Considering how lucrative the sports gaming genre is with the gaming consoles (sports games make up almost 50 percent of the video game market), this news comes as little shock to fans of sports video games. However, someone else may find this move to be a shock to their system. Who could that be? None other than the leader in sports gaming: Electronic Arts.

You see, EA owns a sports franchise that is very near and dear to them: Madden Football. Up until now, the fact that John Madden (and Pat Summerall, who is also featured in EA's games) is a television announcer for Fox Sports was not a big concern to EA as Fox was not in direct competition with EA Sports. That is until now. The news that Fox Interactive may launch a sports division (perhaps even a football game) complicates things greatly. So what's gonna happen? At this point, it's hard to say. On one hand, the Madden franchise is an established name with great brand awareness among football gamers. On the other hand, it's difficult to dispute the fact that John Madden is not the sole property of Electronic Arts and has obligations with Fox as well. Will heads roll? The Q-Mann guarantees it...

● Westwood But EA Wouldn't

(Irvine, Calif.) Speaking of EA, (and don't we always?) talks between the sports gaming behemoth and Virgin Interactive are reportedly dead in the water. Inside sources reveal Virgin Interactive has until March 31, 1998 to raise enough capital to stay in business. Virgin initially wanted to hand over the company to EA in exchange for a cool $215 million—cash only, thank you very much. EA then countered that with a bid of around $150 million (most of which would be EA stock) and back and forth the negotiations went. Things reportedly came to a screeching halt when Brett Sperry, head of Westwood Studios (a subsidiary of Virgin), demanded to be a member of EA's board of directors. EA politely said no and proceeded to kick Virgin to the curb. Down, but not out, Virgin is reportedly speaking to several other interested heavyweight industry players (a number of which are very attracted to the idea of acquiring the well-regarded Westwood Studios in the bargain). We do know one thing for sure...the clock is ticking for Virgin. As soon as we hear more Virgin info from the Q-crew, we'll let you know...

● PlayStation 64 Tidbits

(Foster City, Calif.) Terry and I have uncovered a mother lode of info on the PlayStation successor. According to our Q-spies, the format of the PlayStation 64 has not been finalized as of yet, although the field has been narrowed down to two well-qualified finalists. The first candidate in question is the Mini Disc HD. As one would surmise from the name, this new format is basically a high-density version of the current generation Mini Disc. Unlike the existing Mini Disc (which boasts around 120 megabytes of rewritable storage space), the new MD HD is said to feature over 600 Megabytes of infinitely rewritable storage space. This new high-density version of the Mini Disc is a format Sony has been working on for the last few years and is targeted to be the successor to the Mini Disc. The PS64 would be a prime candidate to use this format since Nintendo is also introducing a rewritable format of their own with the DD64. If used, the MD HD format would give the PS64 the storage capacity of a CD and the rewritable features of the DD64. The second candidate is a more recent possibility: DVD-RW. Over the past year, Sony and Philips have been working on a rewritable DVD format. In contrast to Toshiba's DVD-RW format, the Sony/Philips DVD-RW is designed to be cheaper and more efficient than Toshiba's rewritable DVD, which would result in lower licensing costs to developers. Sony is hoping the DVD-RW format will be inexpensive enough to use by the time the PlayStation 64 is ready to roll. At this point, the main stumbling block would be (wait for it) cost. Although the final format hasn't been chosen yet, the Mini Disc HD seems to be the more logical path.

In other PS64 news, Sony approached several developers late in 1996 with proposed specs of the next PlayStation console unit. It turned out most developers were not happy with the design so Sony scrapped it and started to redesign the system. Because of this delay, development systems will not be available until June of 1998 at the earliest. The PS64 is now said to have four times as much memory as the current PlayStation (3.5 Megabytes) and is targeted to be at least as powerful as Sega's upcoming Dural system. That would mean the system would have 14 Megs of RAM (the Dural is said to have around 18 Megs of RAM) and should be able to display more than 2 million polygons per second. The PS64 is due for a Christmas 1999 release in Japan with a U.S. and European release sometime in the year 2000, but we now hear that Sega's Dural won't ship until March of '99 in Japan with a North American release soon thereafter. My question is this: Will that eight-month window give Sega enough time to get back on track as a hardware heavy-hitter like they were in their glory years with the Genesis?...Only time will tell...

● Quickies

In last month's Q-Mann, I broke the news on a top-secret first-person shooter being worked on by Rare using the GoldenEye engine. Well, our sources indicate the game in question will be another Bond game, although it will not be a sequel to GoldenEye. The game is currently well in development and is due out in early 1999. Well, that just about wraps it up for this month Q-fans. Catch ya later...

● The "Q"

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before you do.
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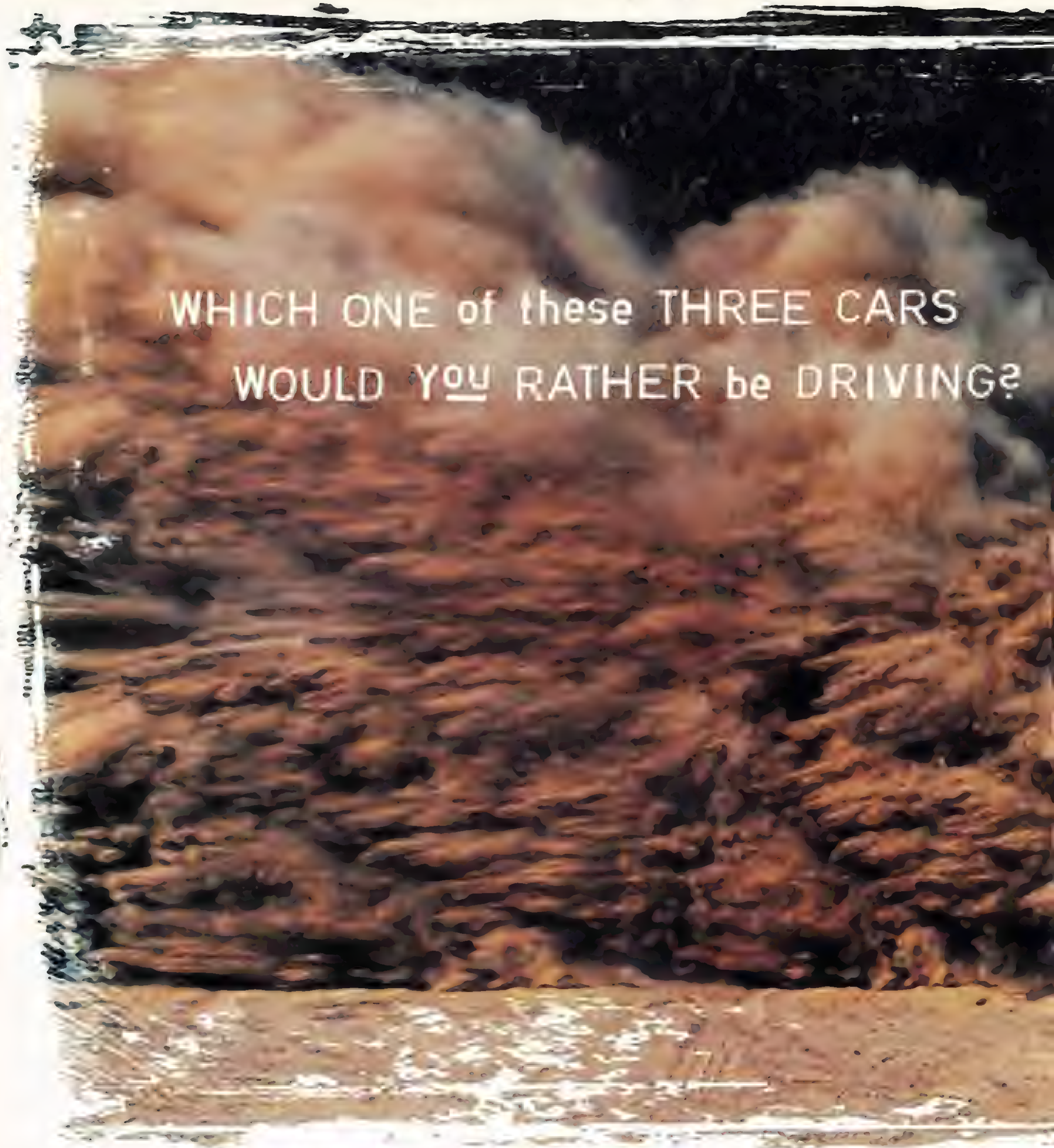
WHICH ONE of these THREE CARS
WOULD YOU RATHER be DRIVING?

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Game Directory

- Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time
- F-Zero X
- 1080 Degree Snowboarding
- NBA Basketball
- Mario Artist Series
- Super Mario RPG 2
- Yoshi's Story
- Mother 3
- AeroGauge
- Tonic Trouble
- Fighter's Destiny
- Wetrix

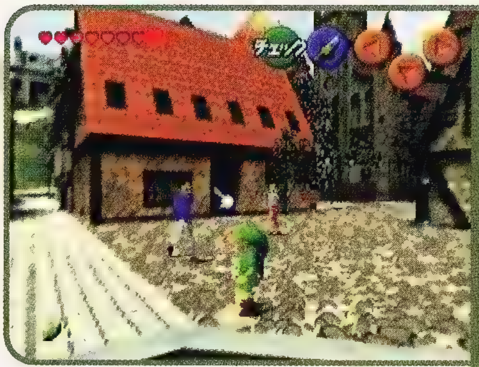
The Long-Awaited Return To Hyrule

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Nintendo Co., Ltd.	1 Action-RPG	70	April 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time

It's been a long wait, but Zelda 64—now known as "The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time" in Japan—is finally on the way. Unfortunately for U.S. gamers, it won't be hitting store shelves as soon as we had hoped. The Japanese release has been pushed back until the last week of April, meaning a stateside release isn't likely until June or July at the earliest. The good news, however, is that we finally had a chance to spend some time with the game, and we came away more than impressed. In fact, impressed is quite an understatement. Zelda 64 is by far the best-looking Nintendo 64 game yet, and based on what we've seen and played, it's safe to say that it may very well end up being Shigeru Miyamoto's greatest creation ever.



The Story So Far...

Much of Zelda 64's story is still being kept under wraps. Apparently, the game takes place BEFORE the Super NES game, A Link to the Past, making it the earliest game in the Zelda timeline. As a young member of the Kokiri family, Link sets out to receive his guardian fairy at his clan's customary coming-of-age ceremony, when he stumbles across an injured fairy with a dark message: Don't let the man named Gannondorf gain control of the Triforce.

As the story goes, Ganon is still an ordinary man and hasn't yet become the evil SOB that you've come to know and hate in past Zelda games. The goal is to prevent him from getting ahold of the Triforce and turning into that monster, and to successfully achieve that goal, Link will have to travel through time—a first for the Zelda series.

The Intro

The game's short-but-sweet intro sequence (which most likely wasn't finished yet at the show) begins with a young Link approaching Hyrule Castle at night in the pouring rain (remind you of a previous Zelda game?). Suddenly he hears a noise and runs off to the side of the castle drawbridge to hide. As the castle gates swing open, a beautiful white horse—ridden by a Hyrulian guard and the young Princess Zelda—comes galloping out of the castle at full speed, as if being chased by someone. After they take off, Link walks out to the center of the drawbridge to see what happened, only to come face to face with Zelda's pursuer, also on horseback. As you can imagine, the pursuer is none other than Ganon (err, at this point his name is Gannondorf, a mere young thief), and as you can also imagine—he looks awesome. As Link and Ganon glance upon each other for the first time, the camera heads off into the stars, setting the mood for the long adventure that's about to take place.

Touring Hyrule

The version displayed on the Space World show floor was about 70 percent complete, but it was set up so that you could only try certain portions of the game

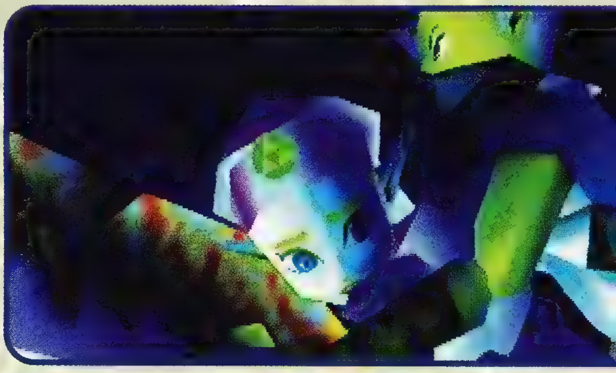
Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.** ●

In Nintendo News...

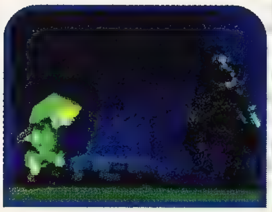
Space World '97 has come and gone, and Nintendo has left their mark on the industry once again. Always about innovation and setting the trends, Nintendo is pushing forward in Japan with a variety of Pocket Monsters games and some truly unique peripherals (or downright weird, depending on which side of the fence you're on) that they are banking on to push the N64 back into the race in Japan, while getting the 64DD off to a rocket start.

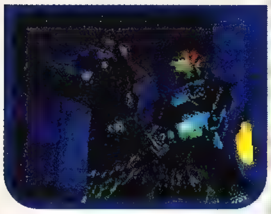
What does this mean for the 64DD situation in the U.S. though? Not much. Pokemon hasn't even hit the U.S. yet (it's coming in late 1998), so NoA is going to have to rely on something else to push the DD out here, and right now it doesn't look like they're going to have enough big-name games to get the DD out in the U.S. before Christmas (they won't release it without at least one "killer app"). But alas, all will be revealed at this year's E^3 show in Atlanta, so stay tuned–it's going to be an exciting year.

Shigeru Miyamoto shows off Zelda 64 to excited members of the press at Space World '97



During the intro, we find the young Princess Zelda fleeing Hyrule Castle on horseback at night, accompanied by a Hyrulian Guard.



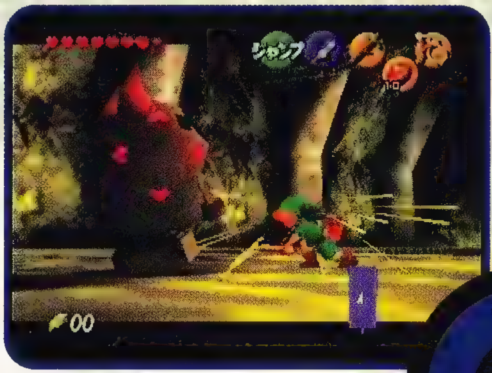


Recognize this guy? His full name is Gannondorf Dragmire. Silly name for such a powerful foe...

through special "Tours" that were selectable on the Main Menu Screen. The three Tours, the Hyrule Tour, the Dungeon Tour and the Battle Tour, each showcased different areas of the game and let anxious showgoers get a good taste of the variety of different play styles in the game without having to play through the entire game to see them. Before we get into the Tours, though, let's take a look at Zelda 64's control setup.

The Controls

Zelda's control setup has obviously been very well thought out. Moving Link around is a cinch, thanks to the N64 Controller's Analog Control Stick. Movement is similar to Mario 64, and while Link may not be able to perform Mario's infamous "Butt Stomp," his arsenal of moves and abilities far surpasses anything the stout plumber could even dream of.

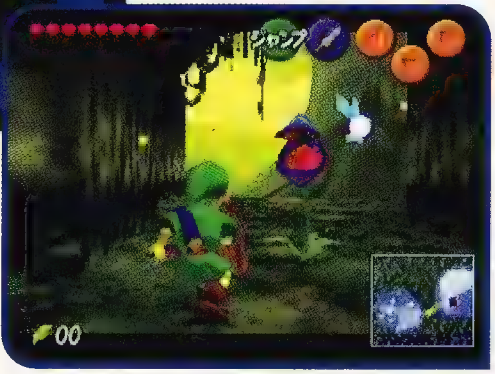


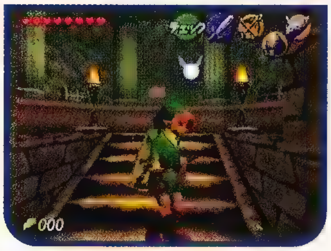
The red target shown here appears when you press the Z Trigger button. This allows Link to focus on an object while moving about freely.

Pressing Start will bring you to a subscreen that is broken up into four separate areas, each with different info. There's a Map Screen (to show the Field or Dungeon Maps), an Item Screen (where you can select your items, as well as view which Medals you've collected so far), an Equip Screen (where you can equip Link in four different areas—Sword, Shield, Clothes and Boots) and finally a Magic Screen that displays the magic spells you've collected so far.

Back at the top of the Main Screen, there are icons for each of the main buttons—B, A and the bottom three C buttons. The Top C button is used for camera control. Indoors, it changes to an overhead view that lets you see things from above, while outdoors it switches you to a first-person view so you can look up, down and all around Link. The Left C, Bottom C and Right C buttons are each used for items or weapons (like Bombs, a Boomerang, your Bow & Arrow, etc.). The A button is used for Link's sword (which can be upgraded at least twice during play). To unsheathe your sword, you press A once. To use it, you'd press A again. To put it back, you press B. Of course, there are various moves you can pull off with your sword, like charging it up, doing the old Whirling Blade technique and more. You can even put away your Shield for a more powerful (though harder to handle) Sword later in the game that requires two hands to wield. Speaking of Link's Shield, the R button is used to control it, while the L button is used for Options (such as bringing up the transparent map in dungeons, etc.).

Next up is the multifaceted B button, whose usage depends on the situation you're in. Above the icon on top of the screen is some text that changes as B's function changes. For example, if you approach someone, B will be used to "Talk" to that person. If you walk up to a treasure chest, B will change to "Open." If you're just walking around and want to search the area, B will let you "Check" your surroundings. There are several uses in all, and the ease of use makes it much easier to become immersed in the game without having to worry about which button does what. You'll be able to jump with the B button as well (usually when holding down the Z button to maintain a specific camera angle), but there will be several cases where the game will auto-jump small·



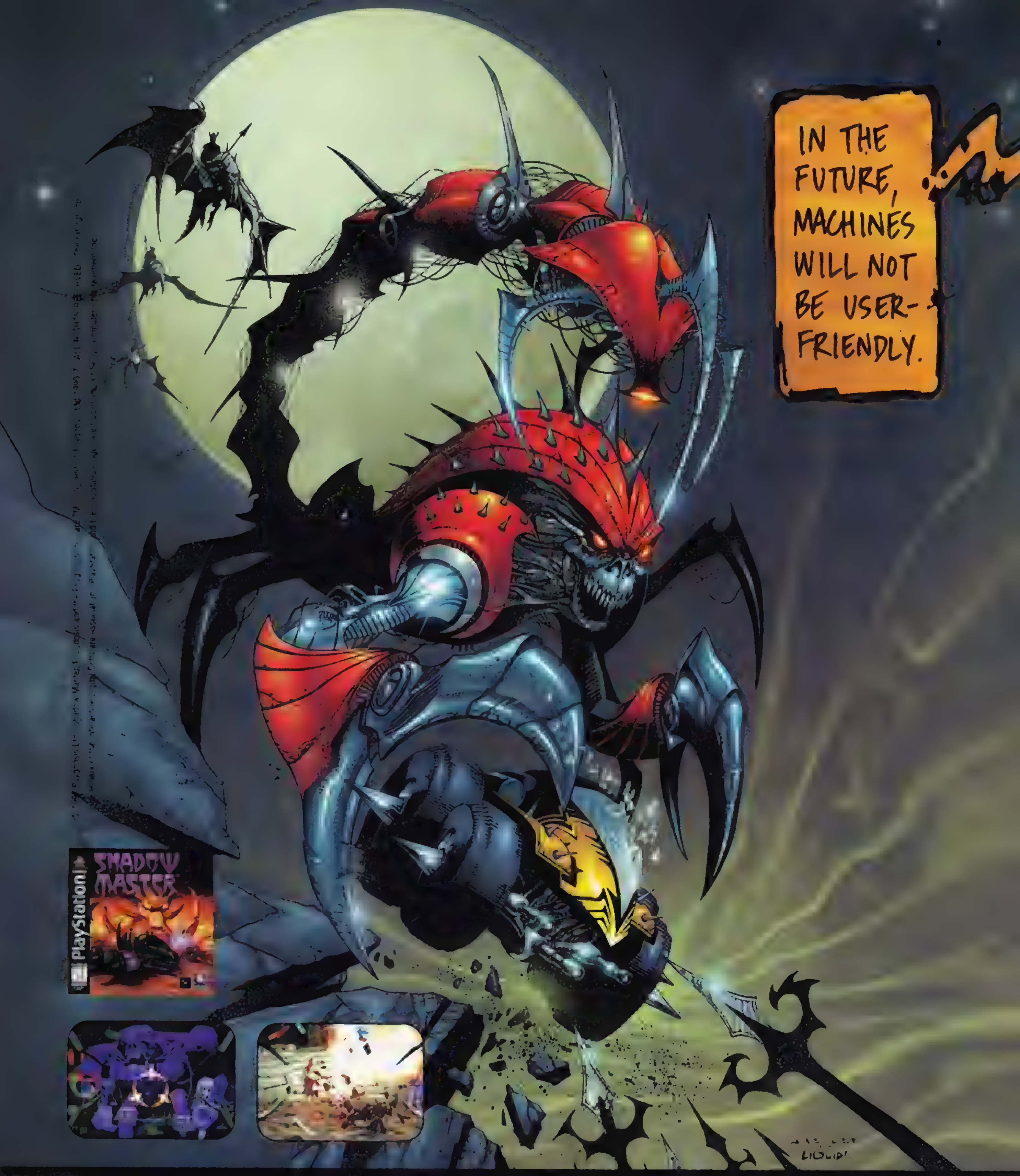


The young Link (above) will be able to use certain items and weapons that the older Link (right) cannot, and vice versa.

Zelda 64DD

64DD

Although it's still a ways off, Mr. Miyamoto explained at the show that the 64DD version of Zelda (which is how the game was originally going to be released on the 64DD) is already in the early stages of development. He explained that they have not yet decided whether or not it will be an all-new quest, or an add-on disc that requires the original cartridge to play. The game probably won't be released until 1999 in Japan.


IN THE FUTURE, MACHINES WILL NOT BE USER-FRIENDLY.
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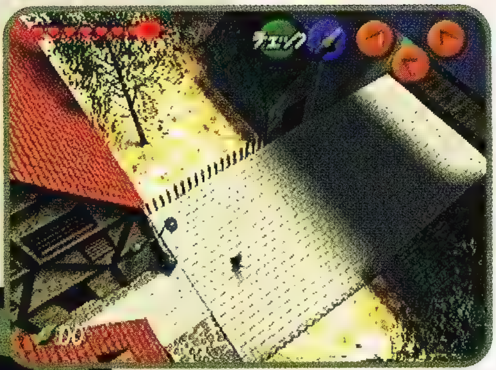
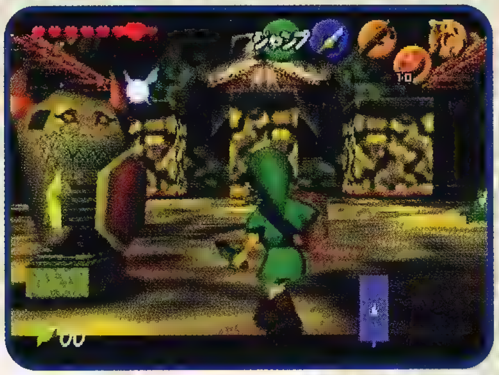
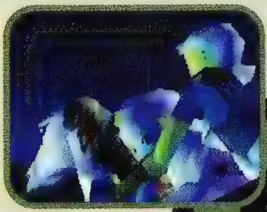


Inside the towns and houses, the camera can be switched to an overhead view, as shown here.



The Underworld comes to life in Zelda 64, with many old and new faces alike coming together to try to stop Link from finding the Triforce.



pits and the like for you, so you can concentrate on more important matters.

Finally there's the all-important (and completely innovative) Z Trigger button. The Z Trigger is used to "lock-on" to objects and enemies (and basically anything in the game you can interact with), so that Link can approach it and check it out without you losing sight of his surroundings. For example, in battle with the 3-D viewpoint, it would be very tough to maintain a clear view of the action if you've got Link jumping and ducking, slashing and dodging, etc. without any camera control. So, to fix this problem, you simply hold down Z to lock on to your enemy so you can always see where it is, while still maintaining full control over Link. It's an amazingly simple idea that works surprisingly well. Battles are now a treat to participate in AND to watch, and you'll have no problem becoming completely immersed in Zelda's 3-D world because of this ingenious little addition to the control setup.

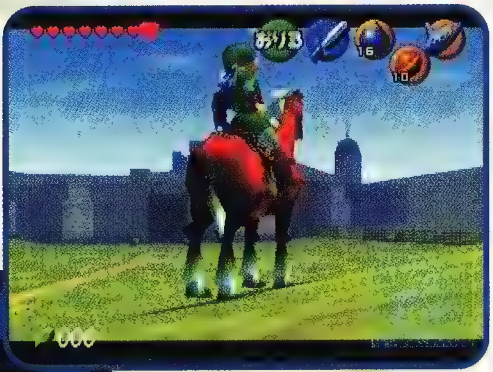
Back To The Hyrule Tour

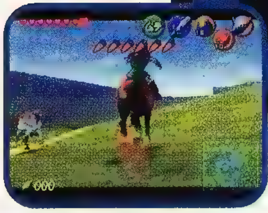
The first of the three Tours on the demo was the Hyrule Tour. The Hyrule Tour gave you four locations to start from, including Link's House, the Hyrule overworld, a River area and outside the castle—riding Link's horse. The different scenarios took place at different times of the day too, showcasing the game's progressive time feature.

When you first exit Link's house, you'll probably be blown away by the beautiful world that unfolds before your eyes. Local villagers will explain the game's basics to you, while your guardian fairy, Navie, will lead you toward any important objects or locations (like the signpost near Link's house, for example).

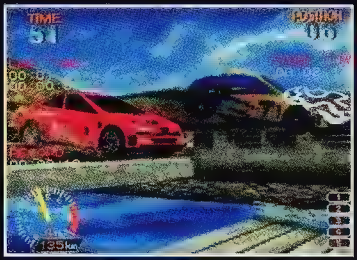
The overworld and river areas (yes, Link can swim, too) are merely other places of Hyrule to explore. There are huge mountains, narrow valleys, dark caves—you name it, it's there. In the demo, you could explore the town (the game is only going to have one main town, similar to Zelda: A Link to the Past), which has several different interesting viewpoints, depending on what area of the town you're in.

Then of course there's the horse scene. There wasn't too much to do in the demo, but you could mount





The older Link can ride a horse to get around faster. If you need a speed burst, you can give it a little whip.



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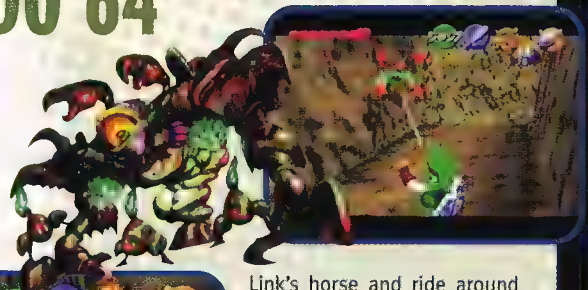
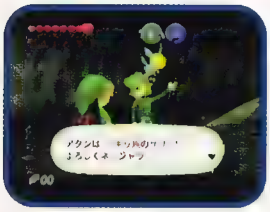
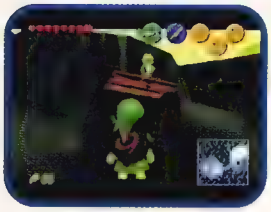


Link's horse and ride around the fields near the Castle, jumping over small fences and hills and trotting around to get used to the control.

The Dungeon Tour

The Dungeon Tour allowed you to start at one of three dungeon scenarios, each of which was a little bit different from the other. Like previous Zelda games, there are traps and puzzles in the dungeons, and there's a slick map system which resides at the bottom corner of the screen that can be toggled on and off. There are huge pits and obstacles, Treasure Chests and keys and, of course, as you'll read about next—Bosses.





Interacting with the locals is nothing new to Zelda fans. Now, important words and phrases are highlighted in red.

The Battle Tour

Ahh, the Battle Tour. Certainly the most impressive aspect of the Space World demo by far, the Battle Tour let you try your hand at three different Boss battles—against Ghoma, Dodongo and Stalfos. The Stalfos battle is fairly simple—you fight against two huge Stalfos Knights in a big room, simply hacking and slashing until all that's left is you and two piles of bones. The Ghoma and Dodongo battles, however, are truly a sight to behold. Without spoiling too much, let's just say the cinematics before, during and after the battles are incredible, and the actual creatures themselves look amazing. Clearly battling in Zelda 64 is going to be quite a treat—both in terms of gameplay and visual splendor.

The Missing Links

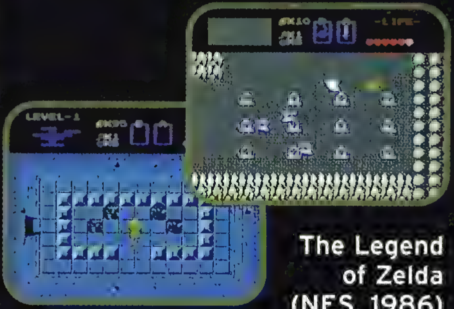
—As you can probably tell from some of the screen shots here, you'll play as both a young Link and an older Link. This ties in to the central plot of the story, with the Ocarina of Time. The Ocarina will allow Link to travel through time, but the exact details of how, why and when are still a bit cloudy. We do know that a place called the Tower of Time plays a big part in all of this, and we also know that the two different Links (young and old) can wield different weapons, some exclusive to their respective forms.

—The Rumble Pak will be utilized in some form, although exactly how and how much is still up in the air.

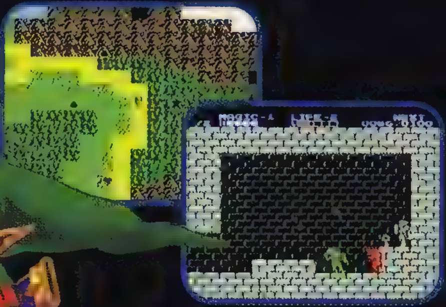
—Yes, the Triforce is back, and it's the ultimate item. How will it tie in to this already awesome plot? We'll just have to wait until this summer to find out...

A Brief History of Zelda

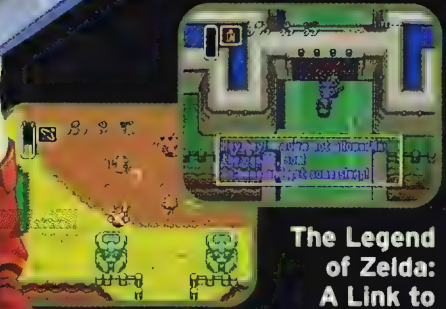
The Legend of Zelda series is one of the most popular gaming franchises in the history of video games. Despite being around for over 10 years now, Zelda 64 is only the fifth main installment in the series (there were also a couple of licensed CD-i horrors and a very cool Game & Watch game). Here's a quick look at each of the previous four Zelda titles.



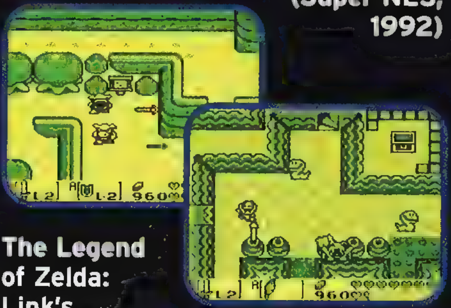
The Legend of Zelda (NES, 1986)



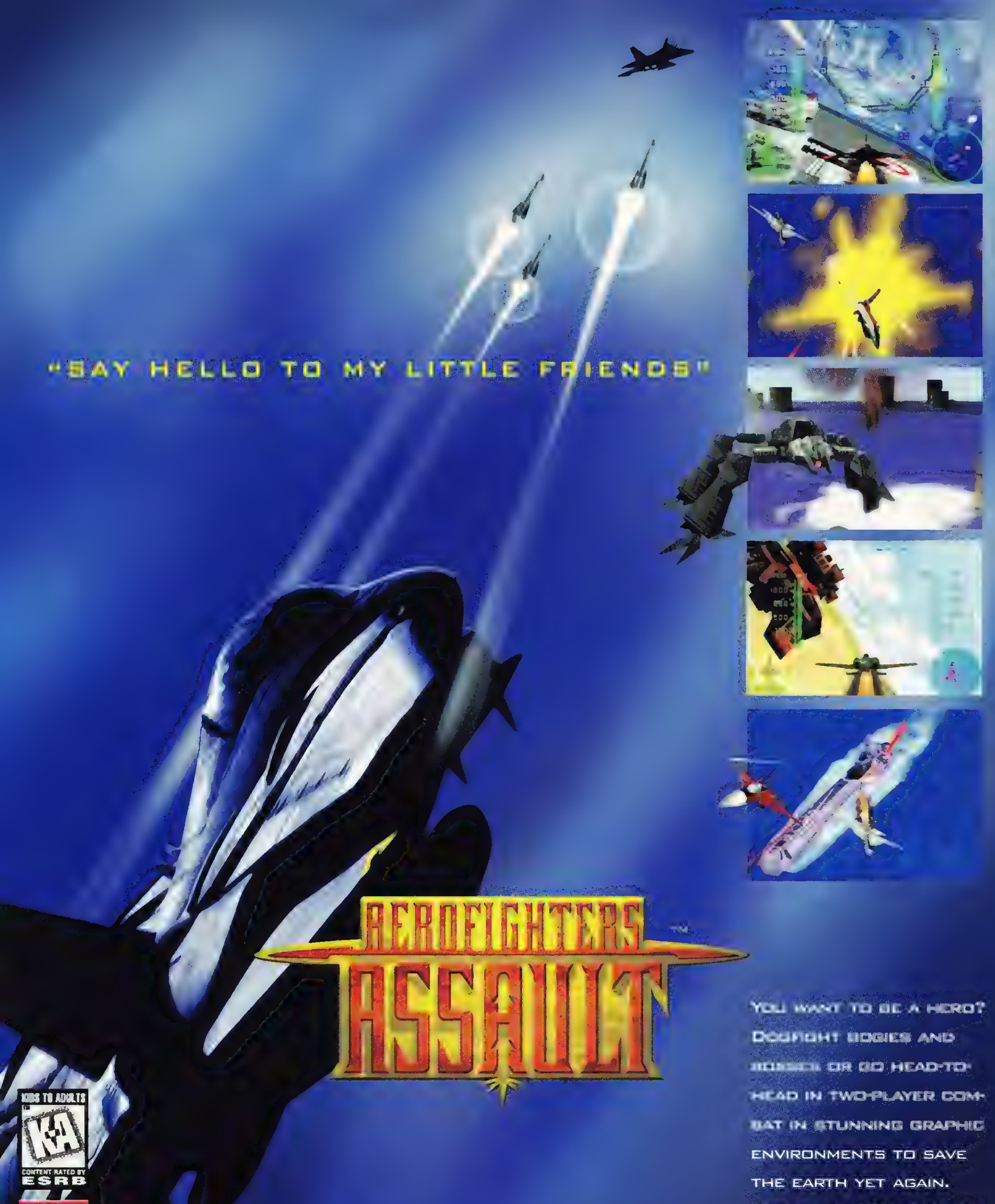
Zelda II: The Adventures of Link (NES, 1987)



The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (Super NES, 1992)



The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening (GB, 1994)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NINTENDO 64

VIDEO SYSTEM

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Nintendo Co., Ltd.	1-4 Racing	60	June 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

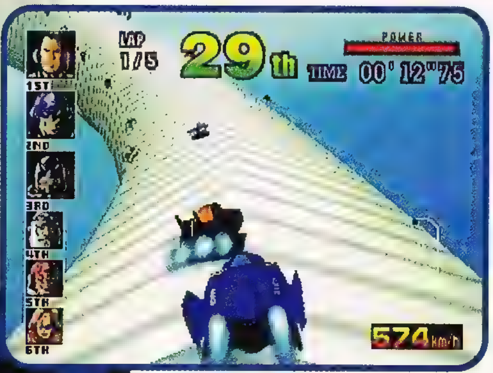
F-Zero X

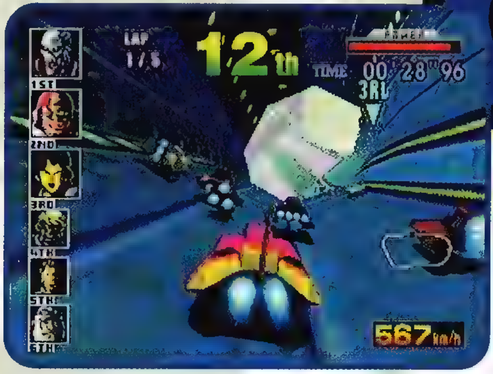
Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk**

Nintendo's Gravity-Defying Racer Returns

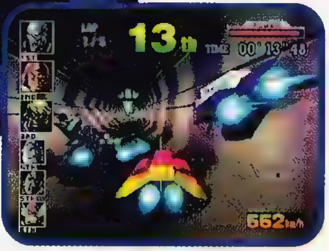
It may have been a long time in coming (over seven years, to be exact), but Nintendo is finally back in the garage working on a sequel to the smash hit first-gen Super NES racer, F-Zero. F-Zero X (tentative title) was shown in playable form for the first time at Space World '97, and it wowed crowds with its fast, fluid animation, variety of crafts and intense track design.

F-Zero X features four racing circuits to race on—the Jack Cup, the Queen Cup, the King Cup and a fourth Cup that (presumably) doesn't open up until later in the game. Each Cup has a variety of tracks, just like the first F-Zero, and in fact many of them come straight from the Super NES game (just the names though—the layouts are, for the most part, entirely new). The track layouts are superb, with big jumps, lots of twists and turns, special features (like tracks that are spherical, where you race around the outsides of a huge tube that holds you in with some sort of gravitational pull) and more. And for those who complain about N64 games not having enough variety—there are 30 (yes, 30!) crafts to choose from, each with its own unique characteristics and drivers (including the four from the first game). In addition, each craft is rated from A-E in terms of Body, Boost and Grip at the Selection Screen.

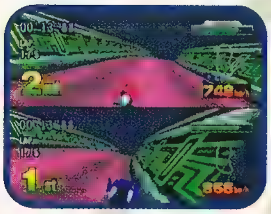




Rarely do you ever see even this many cars on screen at once. In F-Zero X you can have all 30 at one time!



Some tracks (like this one) are laid out like giant tubes with no sides. Thank goodness for gravity...



F-Zero X features both Two- and Four-player Split Screen action, both of which show little to no slowdown.

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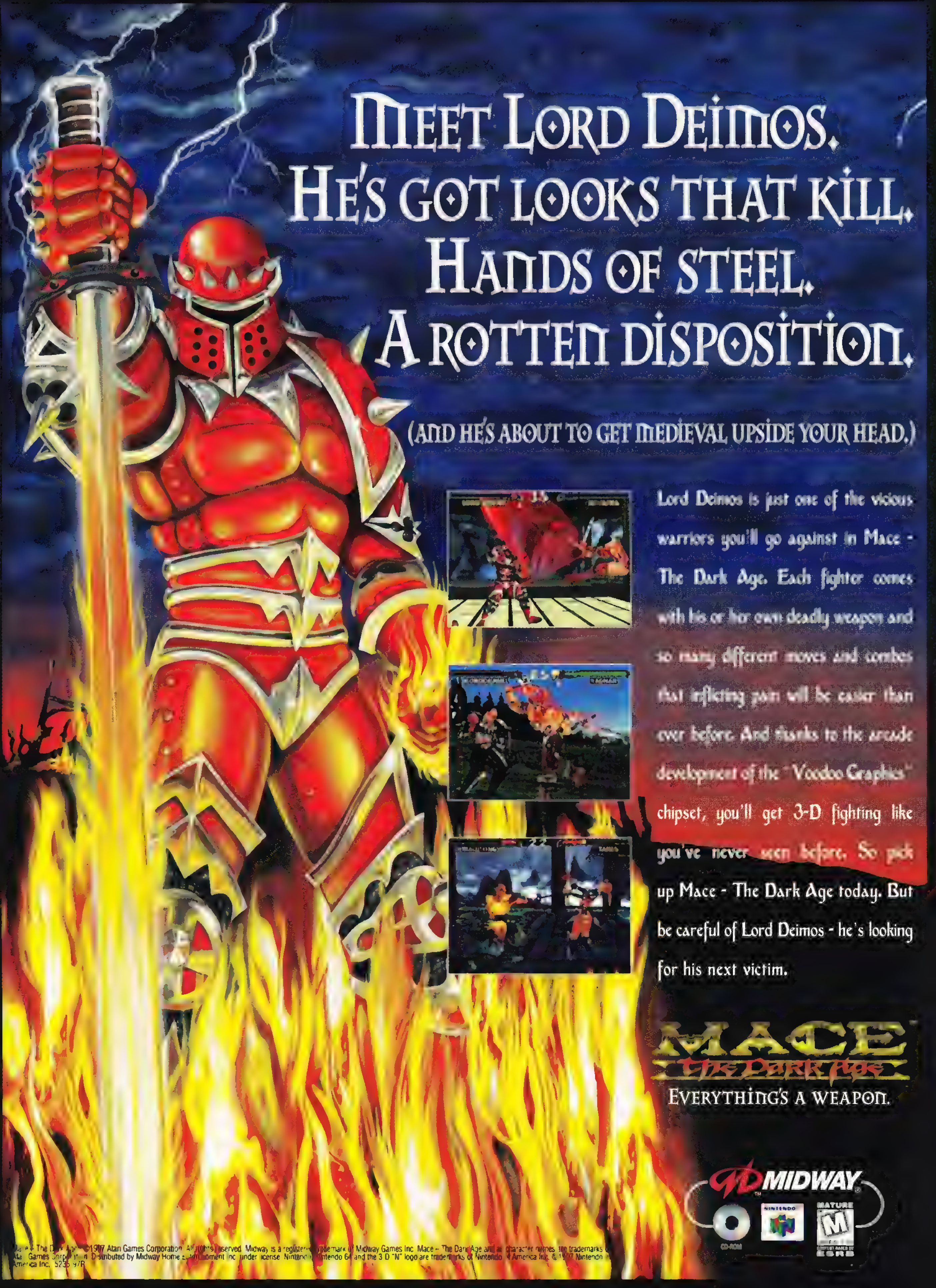
Obviously the best part about F-Zero X, though, is the game's astonishing sense of speed. If you thought the first F-Zero was fast, wait until you see this baby zip across your TV. We're talking 60 frames of animation per second, with crafts that reach speeds of 1000 km/h and more (our personal best was over 1400 km/h), and this is with up to 30 crafts on screen *at once*. Even the Two- and Four-player Modes are fast. Just like the 16-Bit version, there are "zippers" on the tracks that send you forward, and when you complete a lap, your craft gains the ability to "Boost" at the expense of your Power gauge. Fortunately, just after each lap you can race over special bars on the track that will help replenish lost energy (again, just like the first F-Zero).

All in all, F-Zero X is shaping up to be a killer racing game, and with a 64DD add-on already in the works (see sidebar), you can count on seeing this baby in the headlines for a long time to come. The only problem? You'll have to wait until late '98 for the U.S. release. With any luck, NoA will give us a quick port so we can be playing the game before the end of the summer.

Behind the Screens

F-Zero X for the 64DD

At the Space World show, Mr. Miyamoto revealed that F-Zero X would be one of the first N64 cartridge games to have a 64DD add-on disc released sometime after the cartridge. With this add-on, you will be able to choose from more hovercrafts, more tracks and best of all—the disc will come with a track editor and a hovercraft editor! Not only will you be able to create your own tracks, but you'll be able to download ones that your friends may have made, or possibly (in Japan at least) download special event tracks from participating retailers with special kiosks. Heck, you'll even be able to record your best race and turn it into a ghost racer for someone else to race against on their machine! The possibilities are endless!



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HANDS OF STEEL.
A ROTTEN DISPOSITION.

(AND HE'S ABOUT TO GET MEDIEVAL UPSIDE YOUR HEAD.)

Lord Deimos is just one of the vicious warriors you'll go against in Mace - The Dark Age. Each fighter comes with his or her own deadly weapon and so many different moves and combos that inflicting pain will be easier than ever before. And thanks to the arcade development of the "Voodoo Graphics" chipset, you'll get 3-D fighting like you've never seen before. So pick up Mace - The Dark Age today. But be careful of Lord Deimos - he's looking for his next victim.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Nintendo Co., Ltd.	1-2 Sports	80	February 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

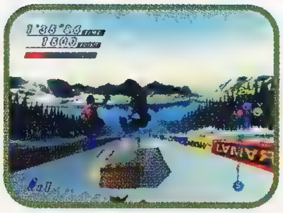
1080 Snowboarding

From The Creators Of Wave Race 64...

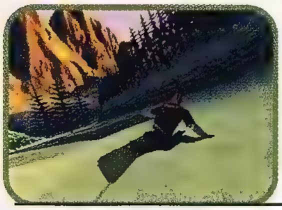
One of Nintendo's two surprise games at Space World (the other being NBA Basketball), 1080 Snowboarding shocked everyone with its amazingly rich graphical detail, smooth control and overall polish that only an EAD game could provide.

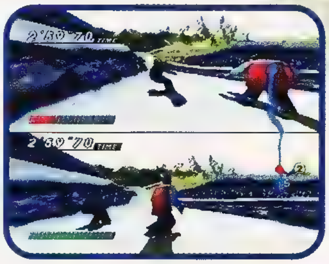
Developed by the same team that brought us Wave Race 64, 1080 Snowboarding is one of several snowboarding games on the way to the N64 in the coming months. So far it seems to be the best one. There were three tracks to choose from at the show (there are supposed to be at least six in the final version), and three different boarders to race as, as well as (you guessed it) three different snowboards to race with. There's a Match Race Mode, a Time Attack Mode and a Score Attack Mode (just like Wave Race), and two players can go head-to-head via a split-screen in the game's Two-player Mode. The most amazing part of 1080, though, is the graphics. Everything looks incredibly realistic, from the path your board leaves in the snow to the photorealistic scenery in and around each track. And control with the N64's analog Control Stick makes everything move smooth as silk. It truly looks awesome.

1080 is scheduled for a February release in Japan, and it WILL be coming to the U.S. soon after, so be sure to check back for a full preview of the U.S. version as it nears release. ●

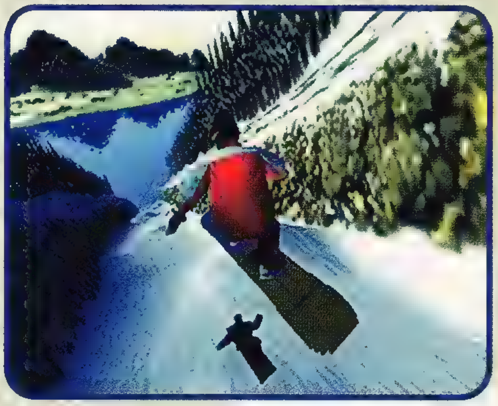


Incredibly realistic graphics highlight the gameplay.





Like Wave Race, 1080 Snowboarding features a Two-player Split-screen Racing Mode. It's smooth!



Steep drops, big jumps, "mondo" stunts and more are all a big part of 1080's highly realistic gameplay.

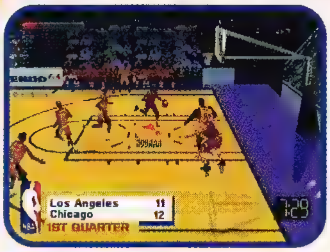
Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Left Field Productions	1-4 Sports	50	July 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

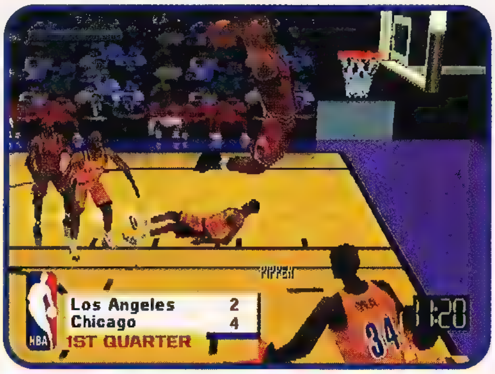
NBA Basketball



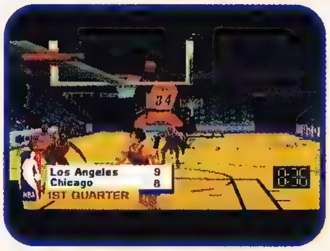
Nintendo's second surprise Space World title is looking very nice so far, despite only being roughly 50 percent complete at the time of the show. NBA Basketball (tentative name—the U.S. name is scheduled to be NBA Courtside) is Nintendo's latest addition to their Nintendo Sports lineup, and is being developed by a U.S.-based company called Left Field Productions.

Courtside features all of the official teams, players and stadiums from the NBA, and has nice polygonal graphics (obviously) and particularly strong player animations (especially for this stage of the game). All of the players are modeled after their real-life counterparts, and believe it or not, there seems to be a good amount of CPU AI in this baby already—clearly a strong sign of a potential blockbuster. There's full play-by-play announcing too, and the crowd really gets into the action, something that has been noticeably lacking from many NBA games as of late.

Since the game won't be available until July in Japan, it's doubtful that we'll see it here until the fall—unless Nintendo is planning on a simultaneous launch, or even a U.S. launch first. Whatever the case, as soon as more info is released, you'll read about it right here in *EGM*.



NBA Basketball will feature all of your favorite NBA players and teams in all their 3-D glory.



Instant Replays and a variety of camera angles highlight the action in Nintendo's NBA Basketball.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Nintendo Co., Ltd.	N/A Variety	N/A	June 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

Mario Artist Series

64DD

The Fun Machine Gets Creative

At Space World, Nintendo unveiled the first three entries in the Mario Artist series (everyone remembers Mario Paint, right?). All three games are going to be available for the 64DD, and all three (four actually—the fourth title, Sound Maker, wasn't shown on the floor) will work in conjunction with each other, thanks to the DD's writability features.

To accommodate these games, Nintendo is releasing both an N64 Mouse and something called a Capture Cassette, which has A/V inputs that allow you to hook up video cameras, VCRs—basically anything with Audio/Video output—so you can grab images and use them in your creations. For more on those, check out this month's News section.

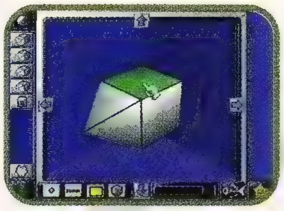
Picture Maker isn't limited to mere 2-D creations like Mario Paint was. Go all out in 3-D!

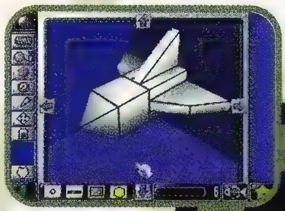
Picture Maker:

Consider this the direct descendant of Mario Paint. You can draw your own pictures (up to four people can at the same time, if you wish), or download pictures and edit them with a variety of options and tools (similar to some higher-end PC paint programs). So simple, yet so much fun. And you can take your pictures and import them into the other programs, like Polygon Maker, where they can be mapped to polygonal characters for even more creative uses.

Polygon Maker:

This one looked the most impressive—and rightfully so. It's basically a stripped-down, affordable version of Nichimen Graphics' high-end Nintendo 64 development tool, N-World, stuffed into a little 64DD disk. With Polygon Maker you can create 3-D models from scratch, then texture map them, animate them and more. In the demo at the show, programmers showed how they took a simple flat polygon and turned it into a huge space shuttle in no time at all. This one looked VERY impressive.

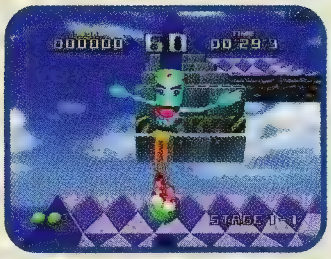




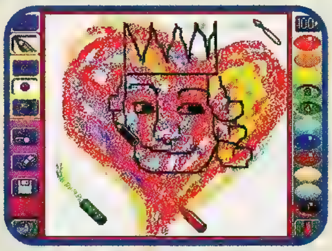
Talent Maker:

Talent Maker was certainly the most bizarre of the trio, but it also looks like it might have the most potential for flat-out fun. In TM, you create a person from scratch, and then have it do a variety of different things, almost as if you were entering it into a Talent Show. You can have your character dance, practice karate, perform balancing acts and more—and best of all, you can map your own face (or anyone else's for that matter) onto your little virtual talent star for some serious laughs. There's so much you can do it's scary.

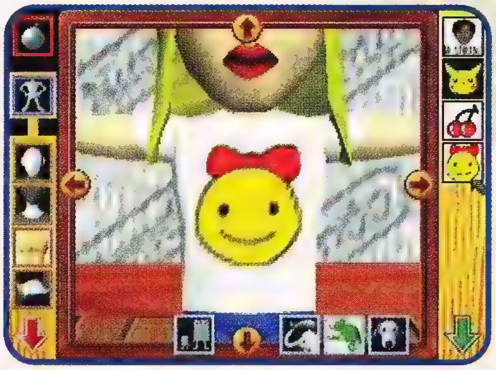
Each of these disks will be available in Japan at the launch of the 64DD, and are expected to be very affordably priced. Nothing official has been announced yet, but it's likely that the Mario Artist series will come to the States. These disks are perfect realizations of just a few of the many cool things that the 64DD will be able to do once actual games are released for it when it launches in late 1998.

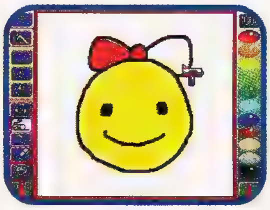


Talent Maker lets you create a character and then perform your own virtual talent show with your new creation.

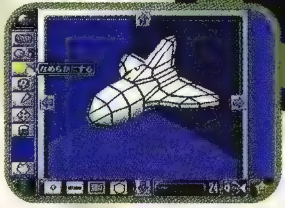


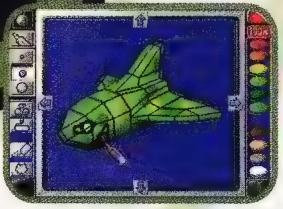
Picture Maker is basically the 64-Bit update of Nintendo's classic Super NES game Mario Paint.

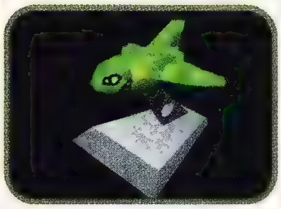




Pictures made in Picture Maker can be transferred to objects in the other titles in the series.

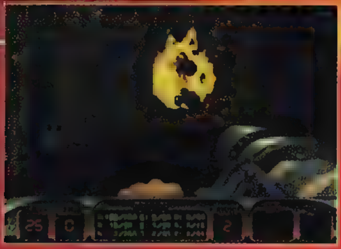




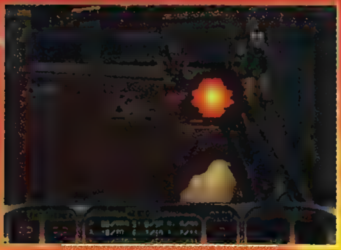


COMING SOON
SISTER ACT
III

Laugh while you frag, from Hollywood to outerspace!



Bag some aliens with over a dozen hi-tech weapons!



An all-out overload of non-stop carnage!

DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN

Duke's in town. And there's nothing he hates more than an army of alien punks crowding his space. 34 levels of freak-smashing 3D mayhem should see to it. Gigantic guns! Gruesome enemies! Total interaction! And all-out devastation! Don't mess with The Man!

PlayStation

Developed by

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

3D REALMS
www.3drealms.com

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SOME!
NINTENDO64
GT Interactive Software

Big weapons and bigger bosses for a fun-filled fragfest!

Earthquakes, exploding buildings and working subways!

Four-player, split-screen Dukematch action.

DUKE NUKEM 64

From L.A. to the moon – 32 towering levels of 100% interactive carnage! On film sets, in bars, on moving subways...no butt-ugly alien is safe from the wrath of Duke! Grenade Launchers. Shrink Rays. Hardcore 3D action. And graphics to kill for! Duke's coming to take out the garbage!

64DD

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

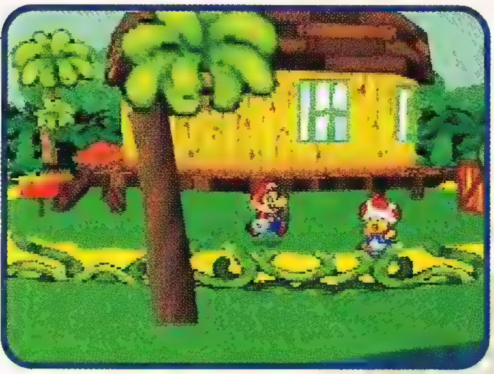
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Intelligent Systems	1 RPG	N/A	TBA Japan

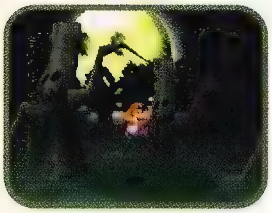
Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

Super Mario RPG 2

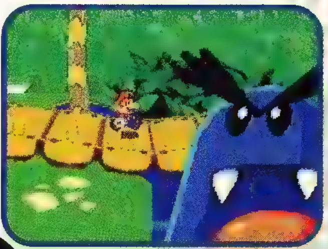
Mario RPG Takes On A Whole New Look

Super Mario RPG was one of the most charming and well-designed games that ever graced the Super NES, and now, two years later, the first screens of the sequel have been released. Not much is known about the game yet, but as you can see by these pictures, it looks drastically different from the original. Mario is now a flat 2-D object in a 3-D world (this is obviously some sort of artistic thing), and according to Mr. Miyamoto, the game will be geared toward a younger audience. We just hope it's as good as the first one.

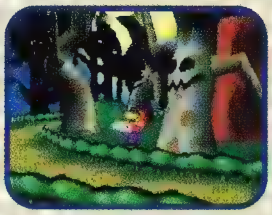




Mario RPG certainly looks nice, but what's with the flat 2-D Mario? Unfortunately, it's too early to tell right now.



Mario's right-hand, err, "pal" from the original Mario RPG, Toad, will be back for more in the sequel.



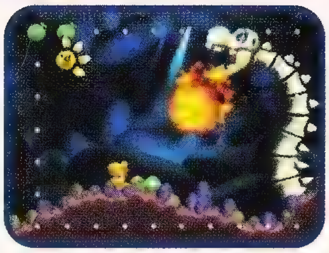
インターナショナル　プリビューズ

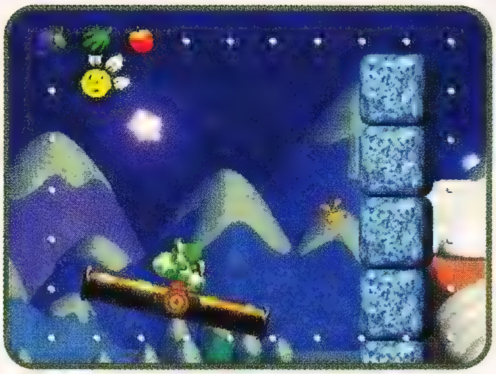
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Nintendo Co., Ltd.	1 Action	100	Now Japan

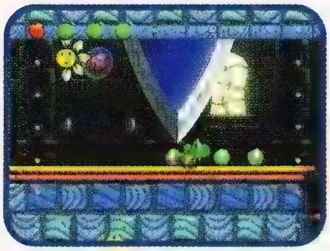
Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

Yoshi's Story

The sequel to one of the most underrated Super NES games of all time is almost finished, and will be available in Japan by the time you're reading this. That's right, Yoshi's Story, the "2 1/2-D" follow-up to Yoshi's Island, is on the way, and from what we've seen (and played), it looks fantastic.



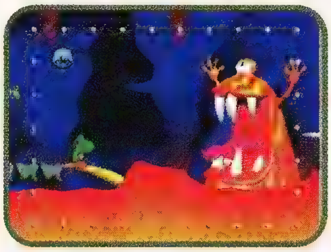




In Yoshi's Story, the main goal is to collect fruits hidden throughout each stage in the game's six worlds. There are six different Yoshis you can choose from in each stage (differing only in color), and no sign of that irritating baby Mario anywhere (thank goodness!). The game controls much like the first Yoshi, but with some nice enhancements. For one, everything is controlled with the analog Control Stick. So now Yoshi can lash his tongue out in any direction possible, and aiming eggs is much easier than it used to be (just press the button to throw, and move the target anywhere on the screen with the Control Stick). And in addition to a variety of cool moves (both old and new), Yoshi now has the ability to swim.

The fruit you collect fills in the dots around the border of the screen.

We don't need to tell you how incredible the graphics are—these screen shots speak for themselves. But if you think this is nice, just wait until you see the game in motion. Be sure to check back next month when *EGM* blows the doors open on Nintendo's latest masterpiece in our in-depth preview of Yoshi's Story.



Yoshi's Story has graphics that just have to be seen to be believed.

インターナショナル　プリビューズ

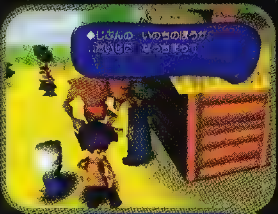
Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

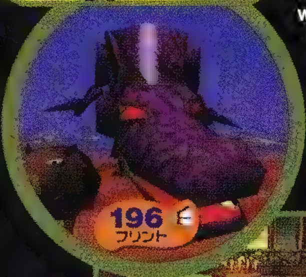
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Co., Ltd. Nintendo Co., Ltd.	1 RPG	N/A	June 1998 Japan

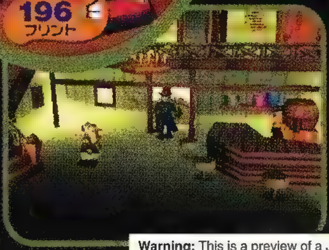
64DD

Web Address: www.nintendo.co.jp

Mother 3







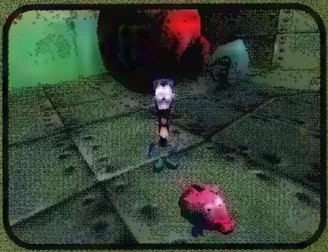
While there hasn't been much information released on Mother 3 in quite a while, Nintendo did manage to sneak some new video onto the giant video wall at the Space World show, and the game seems to be coming along nicely. For those of you who are unfamiliar with Mother, it's the Japanese version of our EarthBound series (EarthBound was Mother 2 in Japan). The full 3-D RPG is slated to launch with the 64DD when it arrives in June in Japan, and looks well on its way to being completed. The fight system is in place, and the game looked quite polished for only being shown on video. We will have more on this one soon.

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Ubi Soft Ubi Soft	1 Action	N/A	May 1998

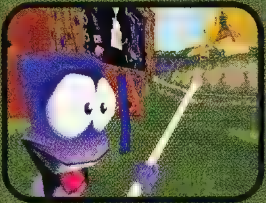
Web Address: www.ubisoft.com

Tonic Trouble



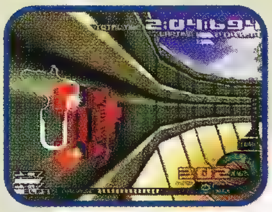
Designed by the primary creator of Rayman, Tonic Trouble is already starting to show compelling designs of distinctiveness that made the aforementioned game find a niche of its own.

Tonic Trouble's plot revolves around an alien named Ed who drops a mysterious can onto Earth. Havoc ensues, and mutations of plants and animals break out throughout the planet. Seeking to fix the problems that he created, Ed must explore and fight enemies with a variety of weapons. As you can see from these screens, this game shows promise. Rest assured, we'll do a more in-depth preview as soon as we get some more info.

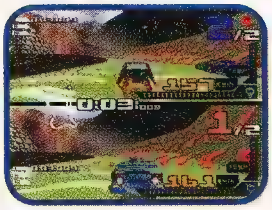


AeroGauge

N64 Hovercraft Mania Arrives



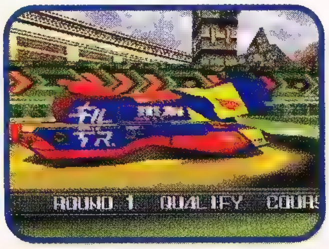
It doesn't take a genius to see how games like WipeOut and F-Zero have influenced AG.



Game speed remains constant even in Two-player Mode.

Aside from the wild designs of the vehicles, AeroGauge is pretty straightforward both in gameplay and appearance (think WipeOut meets F-Zero). Five unique machines are available at the game's outset, including one that looks like an N64 controller craft. Five more are included but must be opened later in the game. The crafts are ranked by speed, acceleration, shield and agility. Each one is decorated with wacky logos and paint jobs a la WipeOut. They resemble everything from sleek speeder-type vehicles to modified tugboats and dump trucks.

Four tracks plus two bonus ones are spread out around the world. The courses feature lots of bridges, banked turns and the obligatory tube portions. The vehicles have the ability to fly very close to the ground or way above it. Because of the vehicles' maneuvering abilities, the tracks have multiple levels and sometimes alternate routes hidden among the layout. Also included are short pit-stop lanes in which cars can replenish their shields.

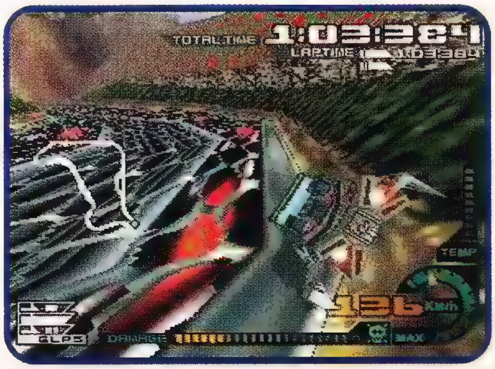


Game modes include: Grand Prix (with a time trial), Single Mode, Time Attack and Split-screen Two-player.

Gameplay is similar to WipeOut with a bit more maneuverability. To help in this area, most of the cars have flaps that extend out on the turning side to help tighten corners. Turbo boost is done with a button combo but can only be used coming out of the corners.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
ASCII Locomotive	1-2 Racing	90	February 1998

Web Address: www.asciient.com



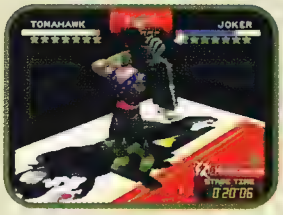
The cars can take corners way up high or very low (like this one), adding a twist to traditional racing play.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Ocean Imagineer	1-2 Sports	90	January 1998

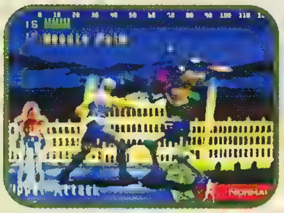
Web Address: www.infogrames.com

Fighter's Destiny

Destiny Turns On the N64



Jokers steal your skills unless you defeat them in battle.



Brush up on your technique against the dummy in the Training Mode.

Fighter's Destiny is a 3-D fighting game with 10 regular characters and a bunch of hidden ones — ranging from a clown to a Middle Eastern wrestler. In some of the game's other modes, you'll face bizarre opponents like a cow (yes, that's right—COW) and a training dummy.

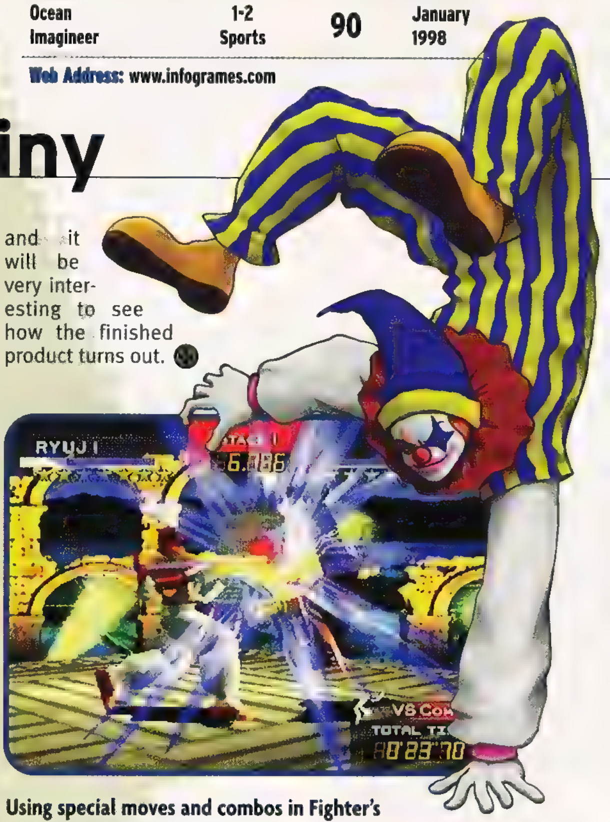
The setup is similar to that of Virtua Fighter—you fight in a ring (of variable size) and the goal is to knock the other guy out as many times as possible. The graphics are smooth and move very fast, giving the game that arcade feel.

Gameplay is different from most fighting games though. The action is points-based, meaning that each attack or knockdown gets you a certain amount of points. For instance, a "ring out" is only worth one point, so it's not advantageous to just knock your opponent out of the ring and be done with it. Using special attacks and combos will get you more points. The game also lets you adjust the amount of points that each attack gives you, so you can customize the game to get rid of cheap wins.

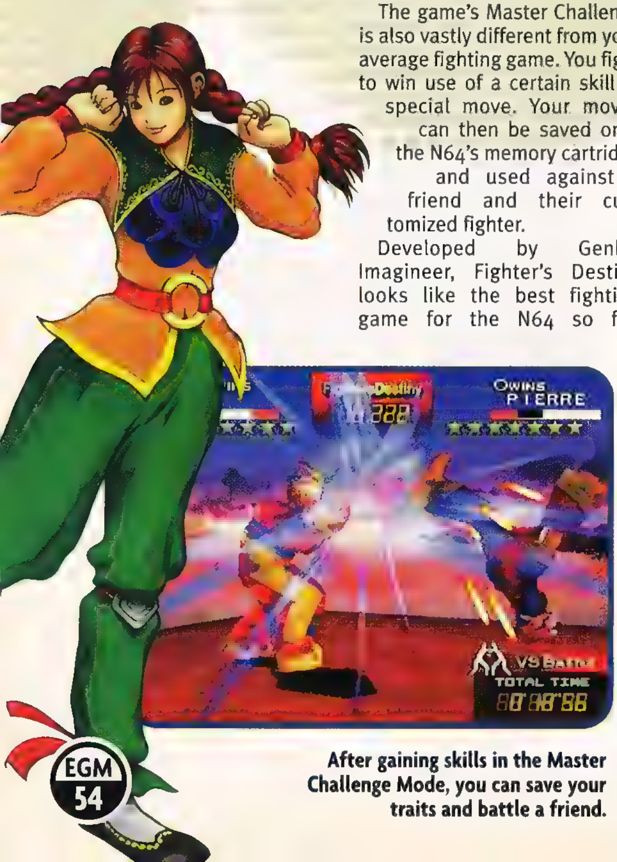
You can use either the analog or digital pad to control your fighter, and configure almost every aspect of the game. There are plenty of modes to play, too. It's got a One-player, Training and Vs. Mode, but Fighter's Destiny has other modes that are not so common for fighting games. Record Attack is an endurance mode (with three categories—Survival, Fastest and Rodeo). In Survival, you're pitted against 100 opponents in a fight to the finish. As the name implies, Fastest Mode is based on how quickly you can defeat your opponent, and Rodeo is a battle to see who can stay in the ring.

The game's Master Challenge is also vastly different from your average fighting game. You fight to win use of a certain skill or special move. Your moves can then be saved onto the N64's memory cartridge and used against a friend and their customized fighter.

Developed by Genki/Imagineer, Fighter's Destiny looks like the best fighting game for the N64 so far, and it will be very interesting to see how the finished product turns out.



Using special moves and combos in Fighter's Destiny will gain you more points.



After gaining skills in the Master Challenge Mode, you can save your traits and battle a friend.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Ocean Zed Two	1-2 Puzzle	75	2nd Qtr 1998

Web Address: www.infogrames.com

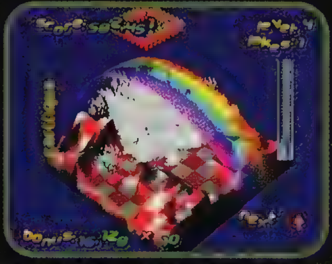
Wetrix

Wetrix is an imaginative puzzle game reminiscent of Tetris, only instead of stacking boxes the object is to build walls and barriers on a floating 3-D platform. If done correctly, the falling pieces will stack up to form little corrals in which water will gather as it periodically falls from the sky. The more water that drains out due to faulty pools the quicker you lose.

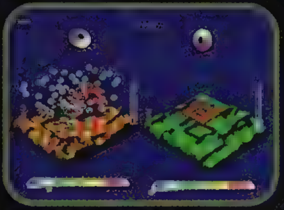
Along the way you'll have to deal with falling bombs, fire, ice and mines. Use these elements to patch or blow holes in your pools or just wreak havoc on your opponent. As the game progresses, pieces will fall faster with water coming in quicker intervals.

Alternate modes of play include ice-covered platforms, variable landscape and random holes. Two-player Split-screen Mode offers a straight-ahead race for survival with the player who fills their drain first losing.

The only question now is how long can cool new games like this one be spawned from the Tetris archetype?



Look at the pretty rainbow...man, they thought of everything!



Two-player adds the bonus of controlled bomb-dropping to help slow your opponent's progress.

Get the point? This magazine is loaded with reasons why you need the SA-VA7 speakers – a sound system that can rattle your inner organs. It's 17 inches of the most realistic sound projection you'll ever drool over. Bib sold separately.

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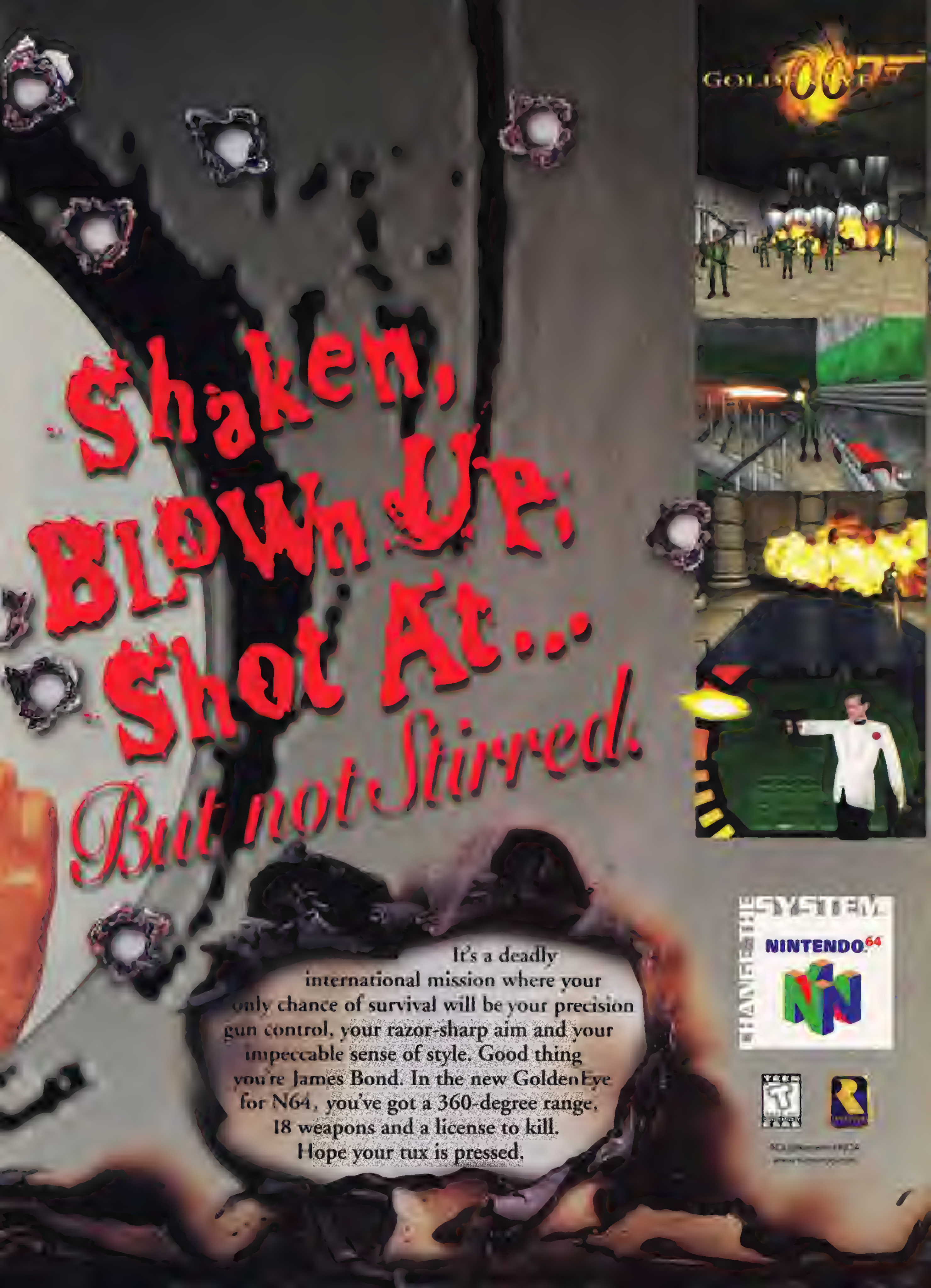

GoldenEye 007
Shaken, Blown Up, Shot At...
But not Stirred.
CHANGE THE SYSTEM
NINTENDO64

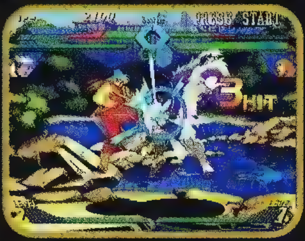
It's a deadly international mission where your only chance of survival will be your precision gun control, your razor-sharp aim and your impeccable sense of style. Good thing you're James Bond. In the new GoldenEye for N64, you've got a 360-degree range, 18 weapons and a license to kill. Hope your tux is pressed.

Game Directory

- Burning Rangers

In Sega News...

The biggest news in Sega-land this month involves a game that hasn't yet reached our shores. X-Men Vs. Street Fighter was released in Japan in late November with Sega's new 4 Meg RAM cartridge built in. The game is a near-perfect port of the arcade game in every aspect, and has virtually no load time because of the cart. However, as we go to press it's still uncertain as to whether or not the game will make it to the U.S. Sega has no plans to manufacture the RAM cart over here, so Capcom is looking for alternate ways to get it here, and (hopefully) a final decision (and announcement) will be made soon. The game will not run without the cart, and it's NOT that expensive (it retails for about $65 in Japan), so with any luck we'll have some good news to report next issue. In other Sega news, many stores have been discounting Saturn hardware in anticipation of a weak holiday sales season (Target dropped to $119 and EB dropped to $129–and by the time you're reading this there may have been more drops). If you've been holding out, now might be the time to take the plunge.



Saturn X-Men Vs. Street Fighter—Capcom's best arcade port ever.

Naka's Masterpiece Sets the Saturn on Fire

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of America Sonic Team	1 Action	75	March 1998

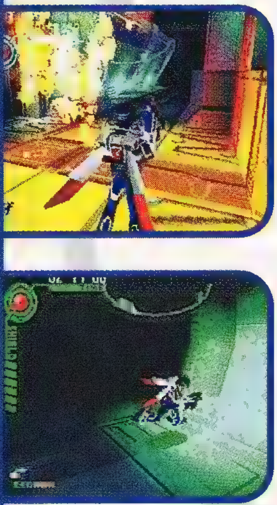
Web Address: www.sega.com

Burning Rangers

Nine out of 10 gamers agree—NiGHTS is a fantastic game. Yet it faced a monumental obstacle when released—namely, Super Mario 64, which stole the spotlight from NiGHTS' novel gameplay. Burning Rangers, the next big thing from Sonic the Hedgehog papa Yuji Naka, doesn't have that problem. It's coming at a time when Saturn owners are desperate for great games.

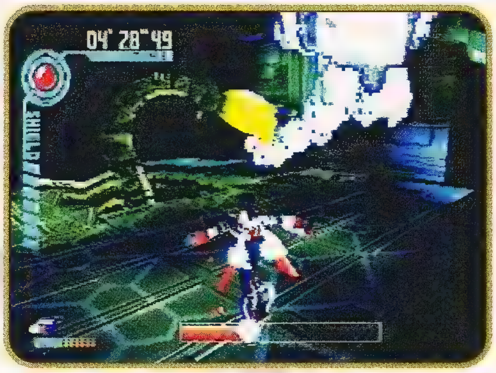
The game's set in a doomed space station where everything's being consumed by seemingly intelligent fire, which blasts out of walls *Backdraft* style and darts at the player like a living thing. You play a member of the Burning Rangers, a futuristic rescue squad charged with battling the blaze while saving the station's scattered personnel.

An automap keeps you on track, as does the occasional radio chatter from other Burning Rangers team members. Besides Boss monsters and the flames themselves, you'll battle robots and other unfriendly station residents. Your ranger can wield five types of firefighting weapons, such as foam cannons and gas grenades, which you can power up by holding the Fire button. Numerous traps—including collapsing floors and exploding canisters—pop up throughout the station, as well. To complicate matters, hostage locations are randomized each time you play.

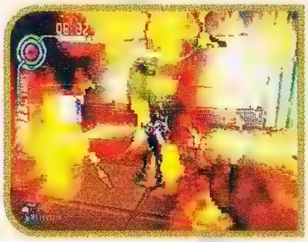


Some levels leave you in the dark, at least until you find the light switch.

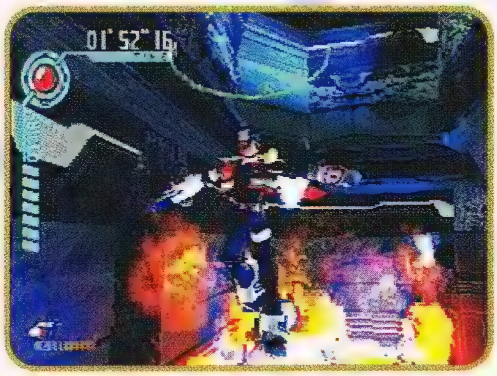
Burning Rangers uses a supercharged NiGHTS engine, so it looks and plays a little like the ground-based portions of NiGHTS. Yet Burning Rangers has the Saturn performing tricks through software that the system's hardware was never designed to do. The game's packed with transparency effects and dynamic lighting. In fact, some levels have you groping in the dark, with nothing but the greenish glow of your suit's flashlights to push back the darkness.



The Boss baddies breathe fire. But then, what did you expect?



Burning Rangers may not look as cutesy as Naka and his Sonic Team's previous efforts, but it does pack all the trademark touches. You collect the apparently mandatory rings, and—just as in NiGHTS—you receive a grade for your rescue and firefighting efforts at the end of each level. Fans of Naka's other titles certainly won't be disappointed. ●



CRY FREEDOM

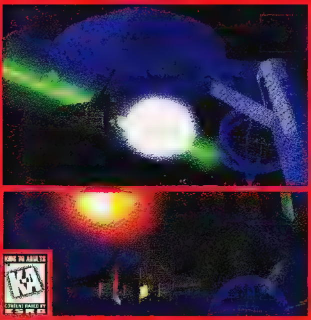
PlayStation

PSYGNOSIS

"Best Flight Sim/Shooter."
–Ultra Game Players, Holiday '97

Score: 5 out of 5.
"Colony Wars puts all other space shooters to shame."
–PSM, January '98

"Colony Wars ranks as the best space combat game on the PlayStation."
–GamePro, November '97



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Blast the chains of slavery straight to Hell. Join the rebellion and fly the hottest ships in the stars. You'll master six unique craft in your quest, each with different flight characteristics and weaponry. You'll fly more than 70 unique missions, success or failure determining a destiny that lies along one of five different paths. The cost of freedom is high. Are you willing to pay it?

EPIC SPACE CONFLICT

PlayStation
COLONY WARS

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SPORTS SERIES™

I've jumped 40-foot gaps.
'Coptered into virgin chutes.
But now, I'm not riding for kicks.
I'm riding for gold, in Nagano.
And you're cutting
my groove.
Shred it.

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NAGANO WINTER OLYMPICS '98
12 EVENTS
13 EVENTS
PlayStation
KONAMI

NINTENDO64
PlayStation
KONAMI

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Game Directory

- Breath of Fire III
- R-Types
- Master of Monsters
- Ninja
- Tekken 3
- Bushido Blade 2
- Rascal
- Riven
- Alien Resurrection
- C
- Fifth Element
- Atari's Greatest Hits 2
- Tomorrow Never Dies

In Sony News...

For 1998, Sony is making sure they can maintain the success they enjoyed in 1997. And what an enjoyable year it was. After lowering the price of the PlayStation, Sony saw sales skyrocket to the point where they finally broke the N64 sales dominance in September. It was also in September that saw the release of Final Fantasy VII. FFVII went on to be the first Japanese RPG to sell 1 million units in the United States.

Barret
"Shut yer hole... fool!"

With the success of the platinum-selling FFVII, the Japanese RPG flood gates should open. Let 'em flow!

Sony also enjoyed plenty of success with their Power Price line of software. Consumer reaction to the Power Price games were overwhelming, especially during Christmas. Some of Sony's best-selling games like GameDay '98 and Crash Bandicoot 2 outsold the competition because they undercut their price. With a worldwide installed hardware base of over 23 million units and highly anticipated games like Final Fantasy Tactics, Parasite Eve and, of course, Metal Gear Solid coming soon, the future looks bright for the PlayStation.

The Hot-As-Lava RPG Comes to the PS

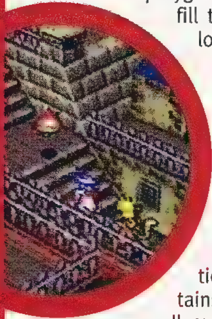
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Capcom Capcom	1 RPG	75	February 1998

Web Address: www.capcom.com

Breath of Fire III

Remember Breath of Fire back in the days of the Super NES? Well, the popular series is now making its way onto the PlayStation. And with the update comes nice-looking 3-D graphics and a CD-quality score, among other features.

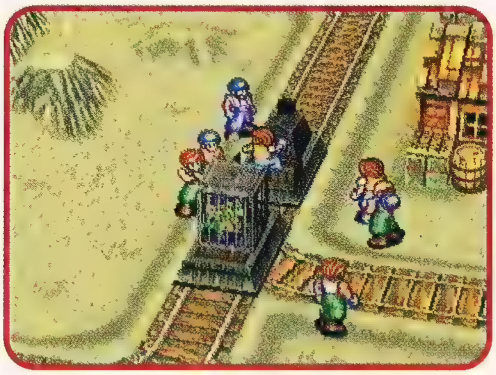
BoFIII gives us a healthy dose of plotline before you even pick up the controller. Even in the beginning of the game, you can see that this isn't like the old Breath of Fire—polygon graphics and neat-o effects fill the screen as a dragon lets loose on some baddies (you being the dragon).



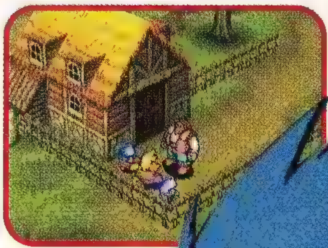
There are two different views: the map view and an area view. Although the map view is not quite as 3-D as the area map, it's still in an isometric view. While in the world map, you can walk around to various locations such as towns, mountains and dungeons. When you walk over a place you can enter, you can either do so or simply get info.

The area map is different from the world map in that it uses 3-D polygonal graphics. The characters are still 2-D but nearly everything else in this view is polygonal. When you run into an enemy, you don't go into a special fighting screen, your character(s) simply spread out into attack formation and the battle begins.

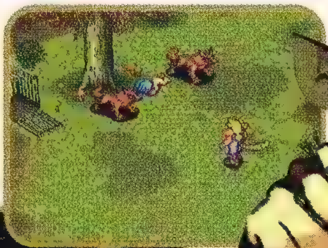
While in the area map view, each character has a unique action that he/she can perform while walking around. For example, Ryu can use his sword to slash through the shrubbery to unveil a secret bag of gold or other goodies. More to come later.



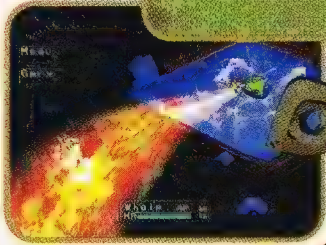
Train rides are supposed to be fun, but in this case, it's just a one-way ticket to hell!



The 3-D graphics in the area map are new to the Breath of Fire series.



Yep, just an average day in the forest—saving little naked boys from fire-breathing dogs.

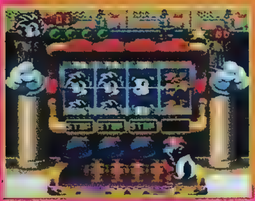


One Wicked Weasel!

PlayStation
PlayStation
Punky Skunk™
JALECO
KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
SLUS-00679
50007

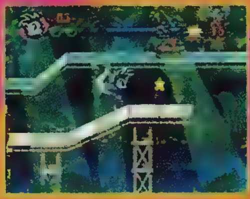
Over 30 huge levels with multiple pathways and bonus levels!
Think you've played it all?
Think again!
Action packed - in the air, on land and underground, in the water too!
Thrash, skate, dig, glide and jump past legions of mutant mice!
Filled with that classic 2D action that everyone's been talking about!

Viva Las Punky



Gettin' Vertical

Aggressive Moves!



Tomb Wader

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

VISIT

JALECO

PlayStation

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Irem Soft. Engineering Irem Soft. Engineering	1-2 Shooting	85	Feb. 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.irem.co.jp

R-Types

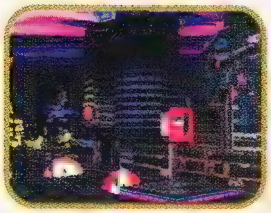
Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

The Classic Space Shooter Returns

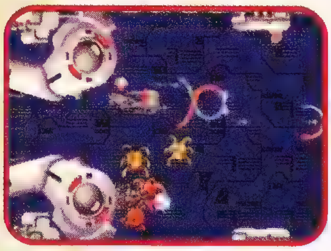
After a long break, Irem is back in business with their first PlayStation game, R-Types. R-Types isn't an all-new shooter though; instead, it's a compilation disc containing the full arcade versions of the original R-Type and R-Type II (the latter of which has never been released on a home console—the PC Engine version of R-Type II is merely the second half of the original R-Type, which at the time didn't fit on one HuCard).

Both R-Type and R-Type II will be 100 percent perfect translations of the arcade originals, and as a special bonus, Irem is adding all-new rendered FMV sequences to the games. Even better though, they're including a demo movie of their brand-new upcoming PlayStation R-Type sequel, R-Type Delta. R-Type Delta will retain the classic 2-D gameplay of the older R-Type games, but with 3-D backgrounds and dazzling graphical effects (similar to Philosoma or Einhander). From the limited amount of screens that have been released, it looks like R-Type Delta is still quite a ways off, but what we've seen so far certainly looks impressive.

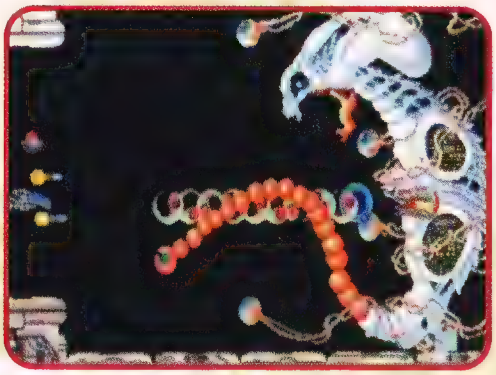
R-Types is due to be released in February in Japan. No U.S. plans have been announced yet, but hopefully someone (Working Designs maybe?) will pick it up for a U.S. release soon. The shooter market needs some rejuvenating, and bringing back true classics like the R-Type games is just the way to do it.



R-Type Delta will feature 2-D gameplay with 3-D modeled backgrounds.



Hopefully someone will pick up R-Types for a U.S. release.



R-Type is known for its awesome Boss characters and challenging play.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
ASCII Entertainment SystemSoft, Inc.	1-4 Strategy	N/A	2nd Qtr. 1998

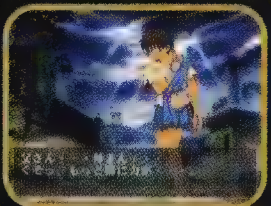
Web Address: www.asciient.com

Master of Monsters

Master of Monsters will return to the gaming forefront in a bright new 32-Bit incarnation early in '98. The former 16-Bit strategy game will boast several new features including impressive 3-D battles (hopefully) and a ton of new terrain to conquer.

This turn-based strategy game will challenge you (or up to four players) to take command of your own race of home-bred monsters and turn them against anyone or anything that stands between you and world conquest. Points and experience are gained by roaming new territories with the intention of taking them over by means of battle. Of course, your monsters do all the dirty work for you because you are the Master of Monsters!!...or at least you're trying to be.

Eight different characters are available, each with his/her own strengths and summoning abilities. Look for a full report in the coming months.

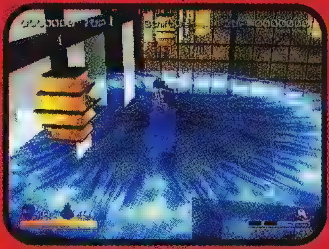


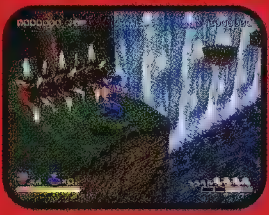
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Eidos Core	1 Action	40	May 1998

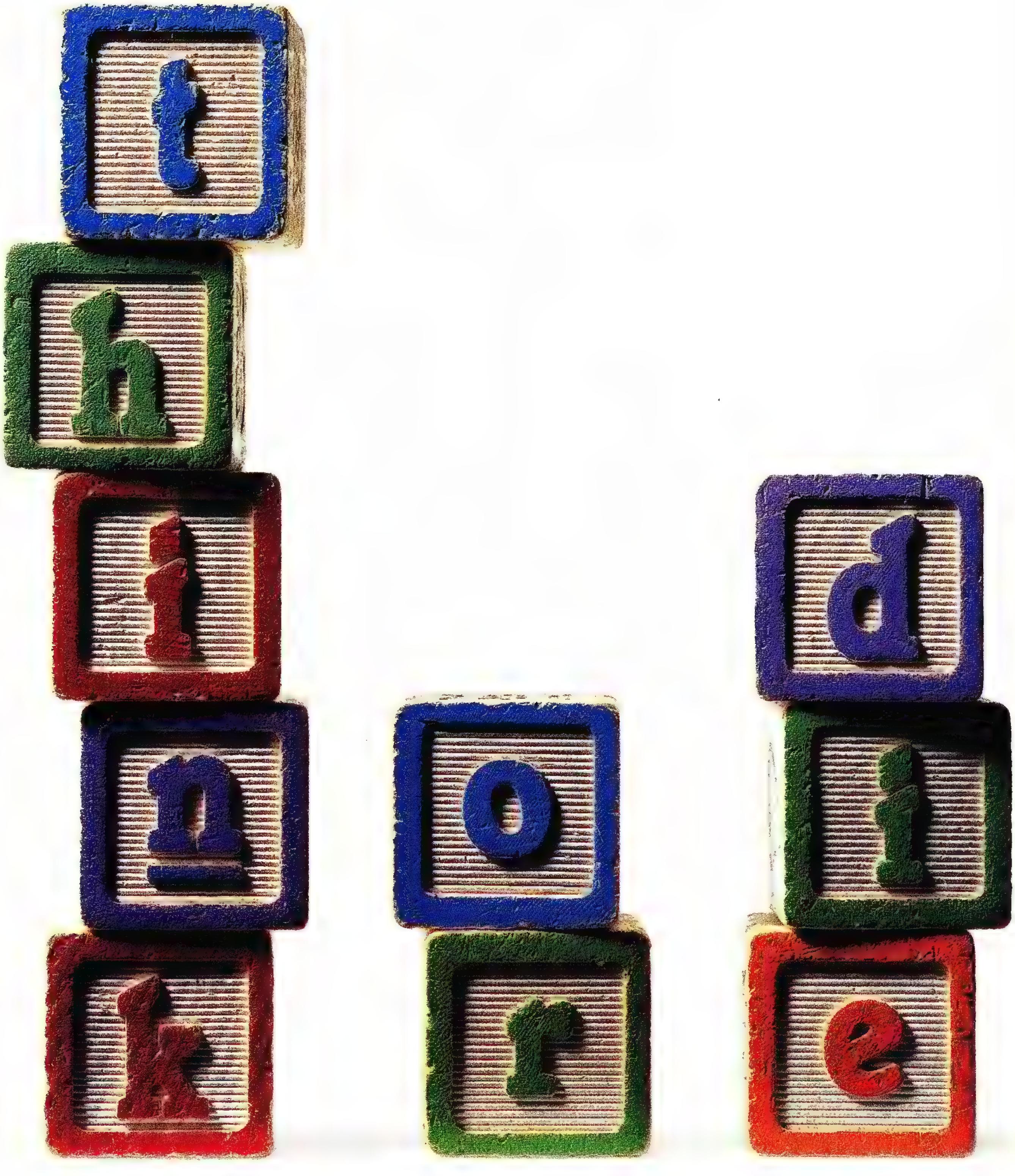
Web Address: www.eidosinteractive.com

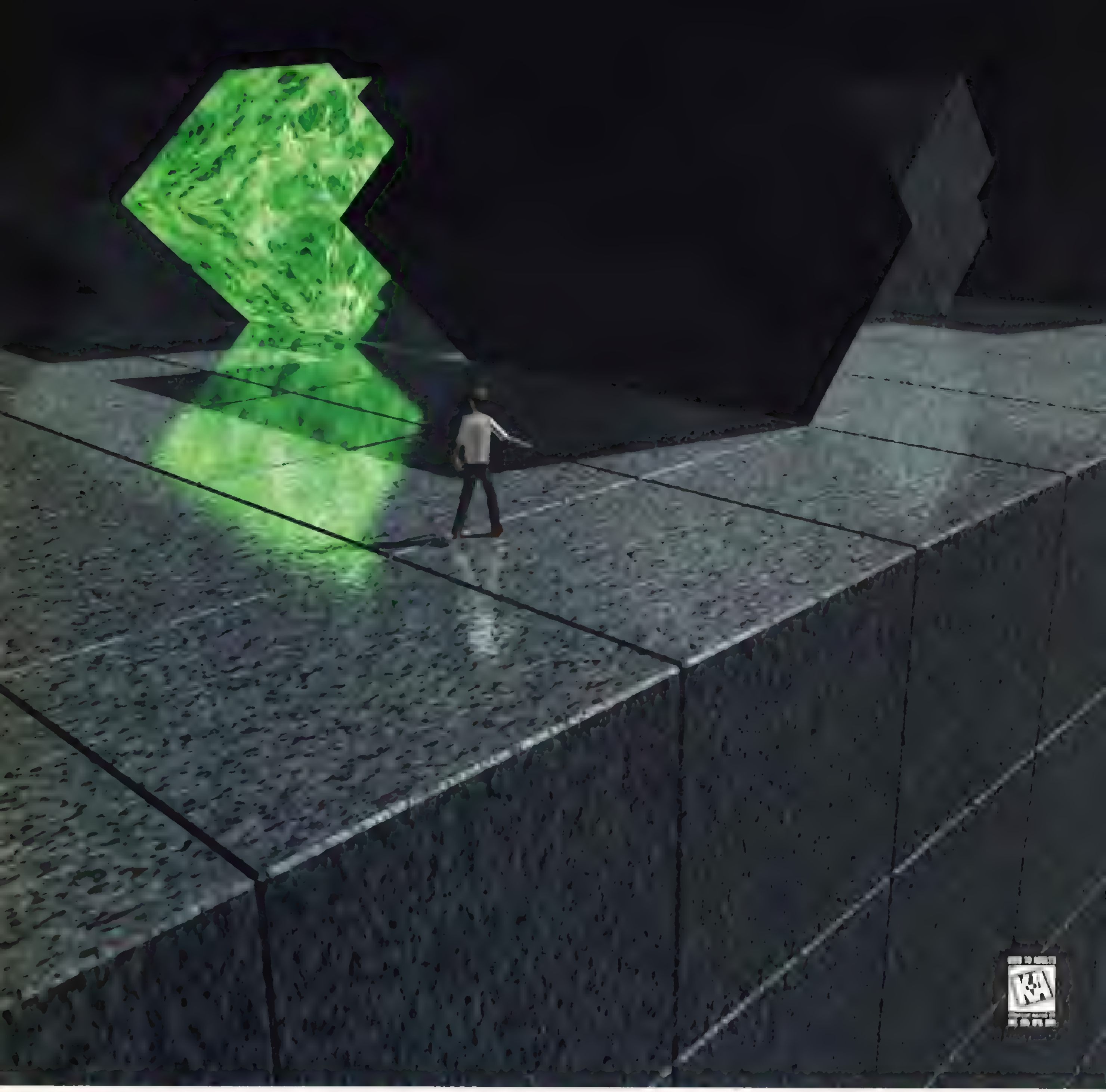
Ninja

Following in the tradition of their latest hit, Fighting Force, Eidos is bringing out yet another 3-D action game with its roots grounded in the days of classic side-scrollers. Ninja takes conventional arcade action and puts it in an open 3-D environment, with complete freedom of movement. Gameplay primarily consists of jumping on platforms, avoiding traps and fighting ninjas and monsters of the Orient. We've only seen early levels so far, so we'll keep you posted as we get updates.






think
or
die



IT'S A SIMPLE PROPOSITION, REALLY. JUST USE THOSE STRATEGIC POWERS IN THAT NOGGIN OF YOURS TO OUTSMART AND DESTROY THE HUMORLESS GEOMETRIC BLOCKS AS THEY COME CRASHING TOWARD YOU. OR BE SQUASHED LIKE A POTATO CHIP. YOU MIGHT ALSO FIND YOURSELF CAREENING OFF THE END OF THE UNIVERSE. IS IT ANY WONDER YOU'LL KEEP COMING BACK FOR MORE?

PlayStation™ **Only on PlayStation.**

Intelligent Qube™

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Namco Namco	1-2 Fighting	N/A	3rd Qtr. 1998

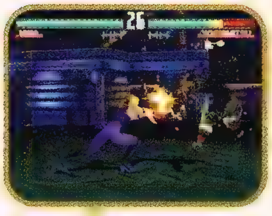
Web Address: www.namco.com

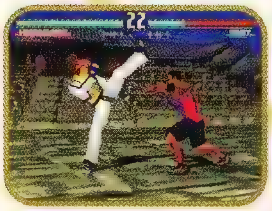
Tekken 3

Fists of Iron and a Whole Lot More

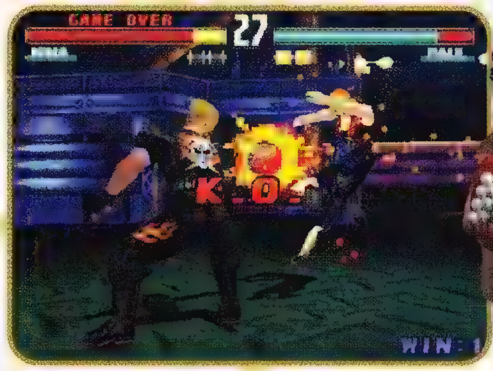
When the two previous installments of the Tekken series hit the PlayStation, they had one thing in common: Both were improved over the arcade version. Still, we had our doubts over whether Tekken 3 would make an equally stunning home translation. From what we have seen so far (admittedly, only screen shots), the game looks nearly arcade perfect.

Tekken 3's story starts where Tekken 2 left off—at the final battle with Kazuya (and Devil). Heihachi has gained control of Kazuya's Mishima conglomerate and is now helping to settle wars and aiding third-world countries. During an archeological dig in Central America, Heihachi's workers dig up a mysterious life-form. Heihachi knows not what it is because communication is lost. When he gets there, all that is left are corpses.





Many of the old stars of Tekken came back. Of course, there are some new additions as well.



Like Tekken 2, the KOs still look as painful as ever. Should "Beard-O" Paul be knocking down girls like that?

As the strange story continues, Heihachi comes to conclusion that he must hold another King of Iron Fist Tournament. As fighters gather to challenge one another, so will PlayStation owners. Of course, no one will die (or hopefully even get hurt) when they fight each other on the PlayStation.

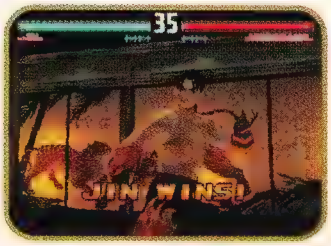
Tekken 3 has an improved graphics engine, more lighting effects and more detailed characters. The backgrounds have also been improved, with all the pseudo 2-D buildings and structures of the arcade game. Of course, the PlayStation version will have a rendered intro along with ending cinemas for each of the characters.

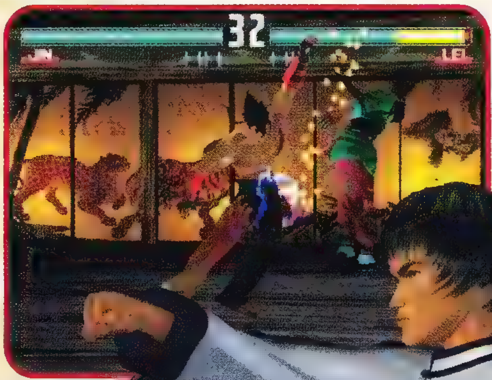
We should also put to bed rumors of Tekken 3 needing an add-on to work properly. Mike Fischer, Namco's director of marketing, says that no add-on will be needed to enjoy the PlayStation version of the arcade hit. "The development team is really pushing the limits of the PlayStation," commented Fischer. "Tekken 3 will showcase what the system is really capable of doing."

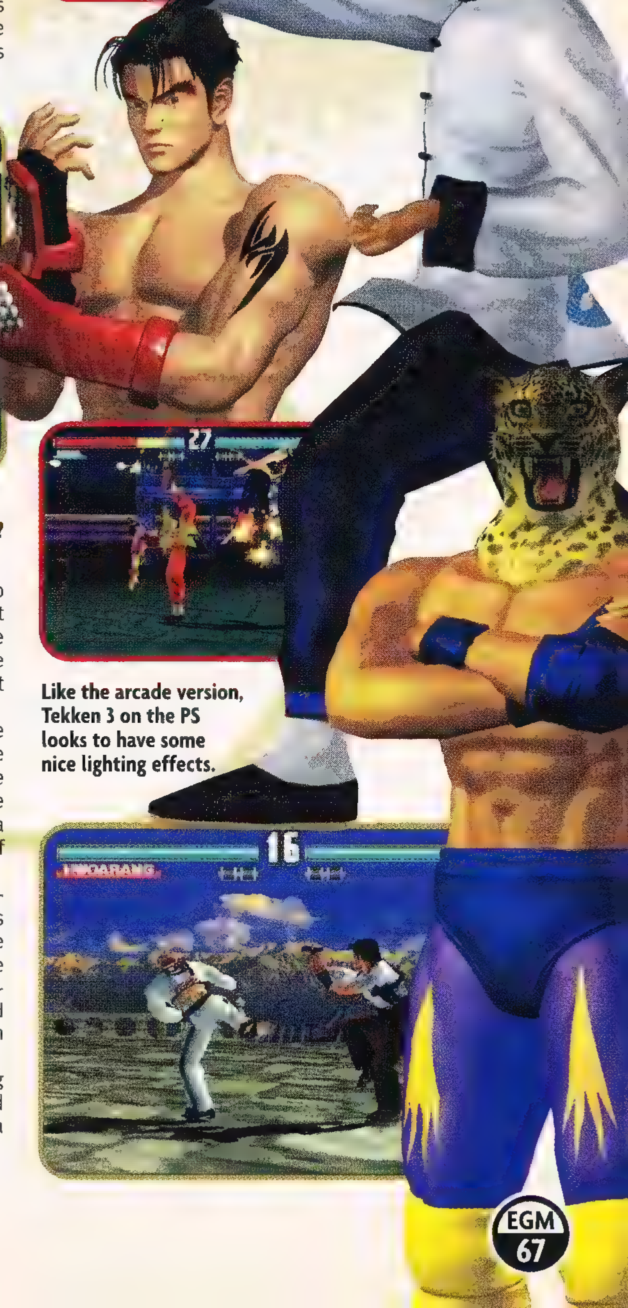
But is the system capable of reproducing the visual pizazz of the System 12-based arcade game? We'll let you know when we get a playable version.

3,000,000

Tekken 2 has sold more than 3 million units worldwide. They'll more than likely sell one more, since Crispin just broke his copy into a million pieces due to extensive gambling debts. Yes, it's an addiction.







Like the arcade version, Tekken 3 on the PS looks to have some nice lighting effects.

See No Evil...
Hear No Evil...

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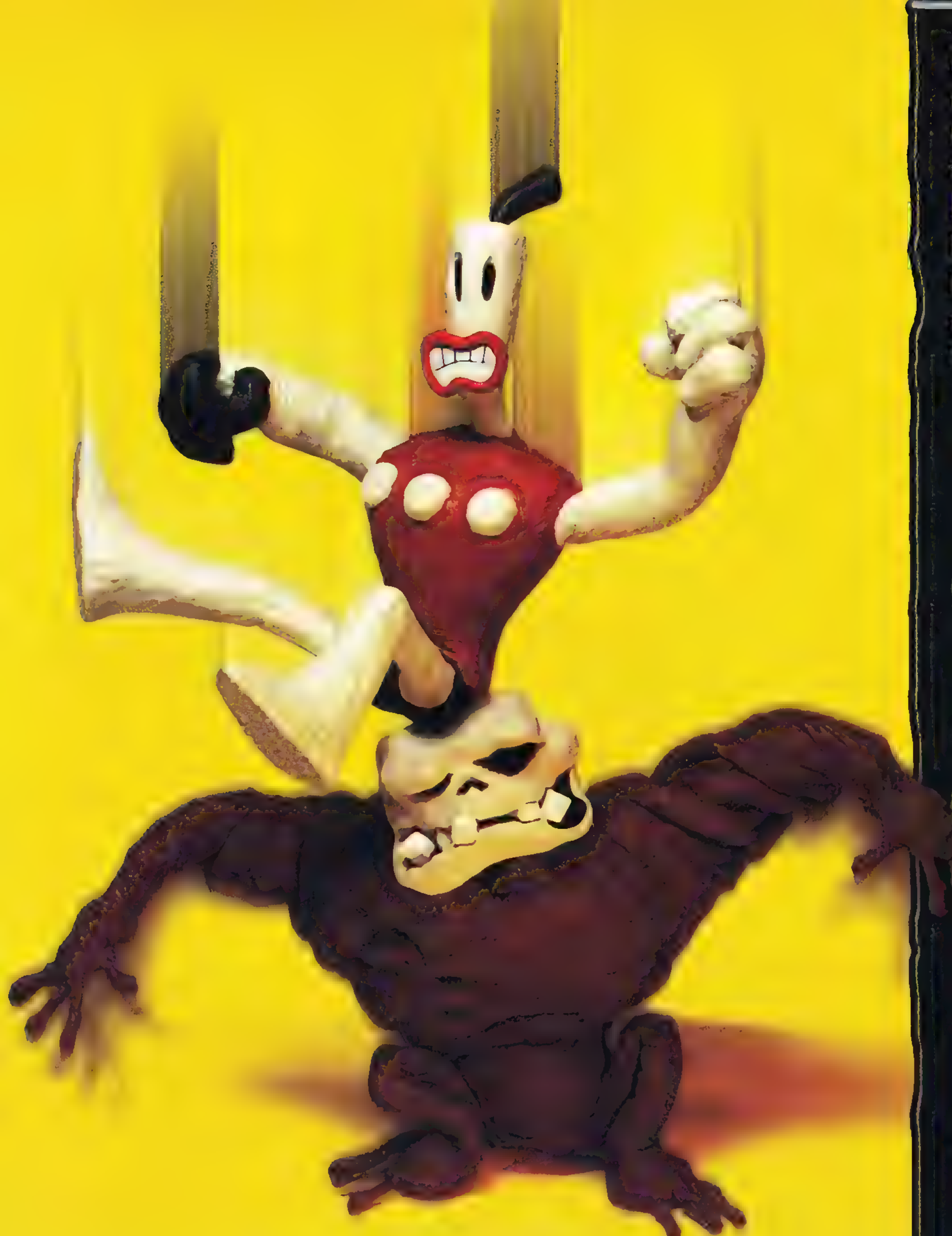
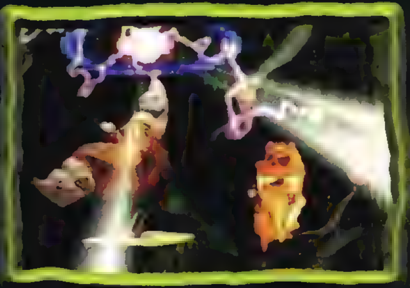


Armed with a killer butt and a boatload of bizarre weapons, you're Klaymen, the last clay action hero. **Run. Jump. Butt-Bounce.** Repeat until you save your beloved homeworld from the evil villain Klogg and his Skullmonkey minions.



Unleash deadly emissions—from the Fart-Head to the almighty Universe Enema.

Give your thumbs a rest with **boo-yoo-too-ful cinematics!**

Over 90 levels hand-crafted in high-tech, superfly, 3-D...CLAY!

PlayStation
SKULLMONKEYS

"Chock Full O' Humor, Just Like Earthworm Jim.™"
—Game Informer

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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Neverhood
DreamWorks Interactive
Electronic Arts

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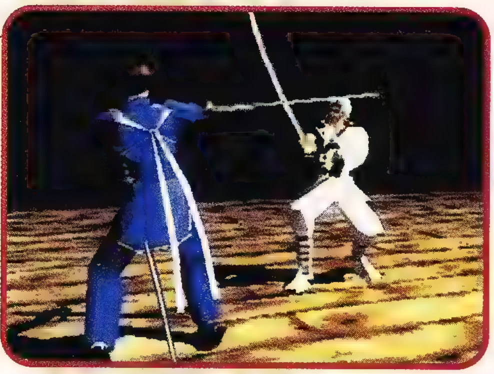
Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system **Import at your own risk.**

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Square Co., Ltd. Square Co., Ltd.	1-2 Fighting	N/A	TBA Japan

Web Address: www.square.co.jp

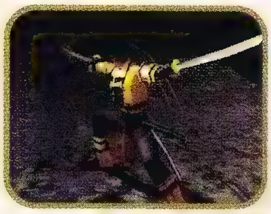
Bushido Blade 2

Square's Unique Realistic Fighting Franchise Returns

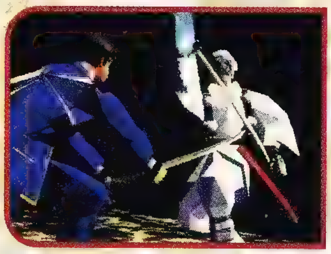


While the original Bushido Blade has only been out for a couple of months here in the U.S., Square is already hard at work on the sequel in Japan. Bushido Blade 2 is well under way, and judging from what we've seen of it so far, it's going to be a nice improvement to the unique samurai brawler that took traditional fighting games to an entirely new level.

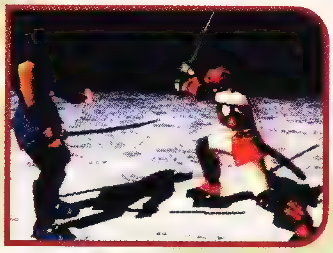
So far, 14 characters have been revealed, seven of which are new, while the other three are returning from the first Bushido Blade (Tatsumi, Mikado and Kannuki). There will be a Story Mode where you can choose to fight for one of two clans, and there are numerous gameplay enhancements planned, including faster, smoother play, better defensive tactics, two-sword fighting and more. In addition, there are more unique fighting stances for each character, there are only two attack buttons now and there's a heavier emphasis on the story in the Story Mode (now known as the "Top Mode" in BB2). This one's still early, but already it's looking hot. We'll have more on BB2 as it develops. In the meantime, start sharpening your Nodachi...



Some fighters will be able to battle with two swords for dual-bladed action.



Bushido Blade 2 will feature at least 14 characters, many of which are new.

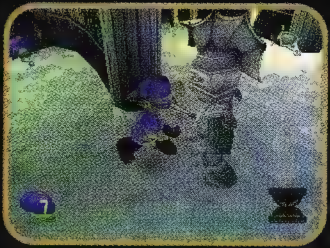


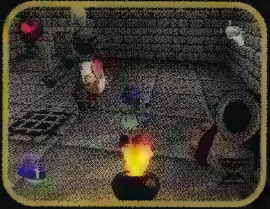
Like the Japanese original, Bushido Blade 2 will support Sony's analog pad.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Psygnosis Traveller's Tales	1 Adventure	30	March 1998

Web Address: www.psygnosis.com

Rascal





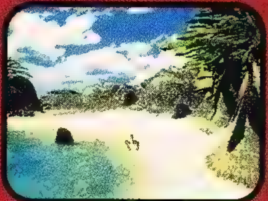
In March, Psygnosis will be bringing out a new 3-D game unlike anything you've seen before. This impressive-looking title will contain a bagful of technical tricks, giving it a hi-res look in low-res, at 60 fps.

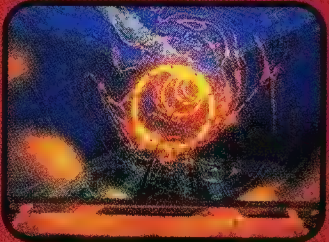
The game concept also looks impressive at this early stage. The game has you following the adventures of Rascal, an original Jim Henson Creature Workshop-created character. Rascal must rescue his kidnapped father, an inventor, by travelling through six worlds in three different time zones. Each of the worlds has a traditional theme, like Aztec, Wild West, Pirate Boat and Castle. But what sets this 3-D platform game apart from the rest are the different time periods. Each world has a past, present and future, giving the game a unique approach to traditional themes (for example, the Wild West may have cowboys in the past, but it turns into a movie set for the present).

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Acclaim Cyan Inc.	1 Puzzle/Adv	85	December 1997

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

Riven



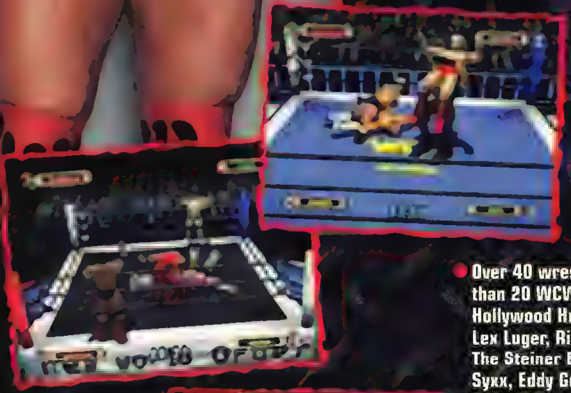


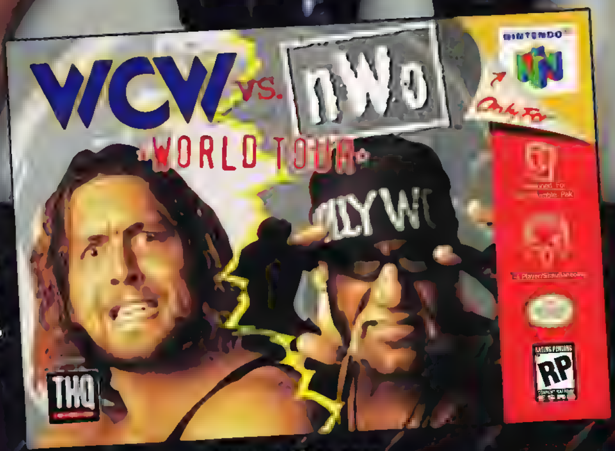
Riven begins where Myst left off. You must aid Atrus in a search for his wife Catherine who has been imprisoned on the island by an evil man named Ghen. On Riven Island point and click your way through 100s of detailed rendered environments, searching for clues in 4,000 plus scenes. Remarkably sizable, Riven is actually five times the size of Myst and is contained on five discs. Aside from the trademark graphic splendor and challenging puzzles, Riven takes the series to the next level by including several animation sequences ranging from roller-coaster type adventures to psychedelic underwater excursions.

Although not your average game, Riven has the potential of becoming a cult hit on the PlayStation. Gamers should prepare for a major puzzle experience.

104 The number of weeks in a row the game Myst held the number-one spot on the computer game best-seller list.

GIANT DEMONSTRATES HIS MOST DEVASTATING NEW WRESTLING MOVE.





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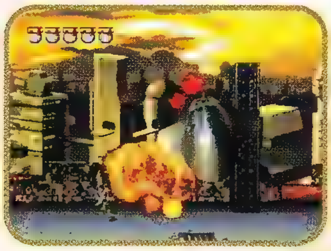
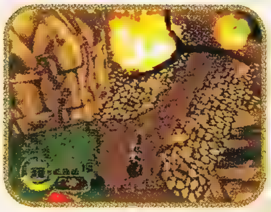
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Konami Appaloosa	1 Action	30	March 1998

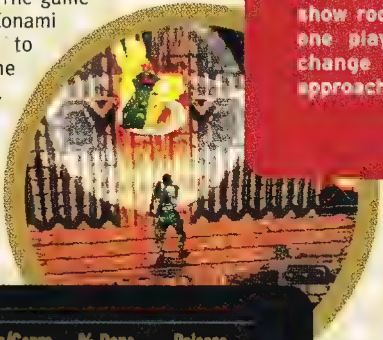
Web Address: www.konami.com

C



After Contra: Legacy of War, fans of the long-running Konami series were itching to get a game that captured the classic feel. If all goes right, this game will be successful in bringing the series back to its rightful place. Not much is known about "C" at this time—not even if the game will be called Contra—but from the screen shots, it looks as if the game will be a combination of 2-D and 3-D levels with rendered backgrounds and enemies. The game is currently 30 percent complete, and Konami is hoping to release the game in March.





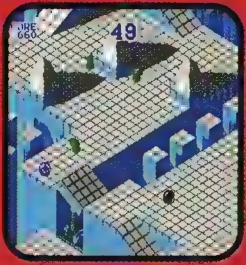
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Midway Atari	1-2 Compilation	40	January 1998

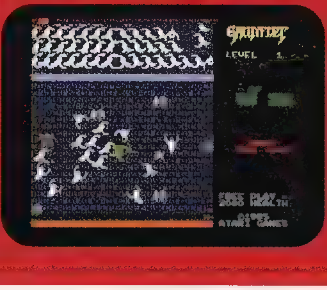
Web Address: www.midway.com

Arcade's Greatest Hits: The Atari Collection 2

This newest compilation from Midway showcases some true classics. None of these games were low key in their time, and most are still remembered today by older gamers.

This edition includes Crystal Castles, Marble Madness, Gauntlet, Millipede, Paperboy and Road Blasters. Our very early beta doesn't support analog controls (which would be nice for Marble Madness or Millipede) or multiple players (but the Gauntlet screen does show room for more than one player). This might change as the game approaches release.

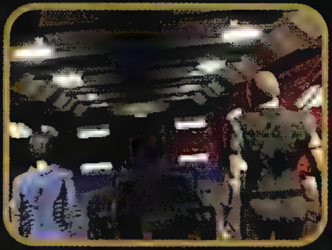




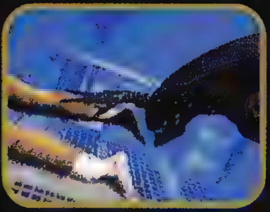
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Fox Interactive Argonaut	1 Action	N/A	2nd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.foxinteractive.com

Alien Resurrection



The only shots available are those of full-motion video clips.



Science-fiction movies lend themselves to video games, so it's no surprise that early screens are already appearing for the PlayStation (a Saturn one is also under development) version of Alien Resurrection, the game.

This third-person, 3-D action game takes place in the Alien-infested corridored environment of the research vessel Auriga. Players will command five different characters as they progress through 13 levels to stop the troubled ship from reaching Earth. Cut scenes from the movie will also be integrated into the game—which could be a good or bad thing, depending on what you thought of the film.

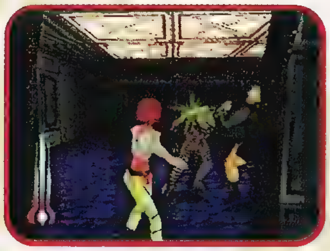
4 Number of *Alien* movies

Number of times the last Alien was blown out of an airlock to end the movie 3

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
TBA Kalisto	1 Action	N/A	2nd Qtr. 1998

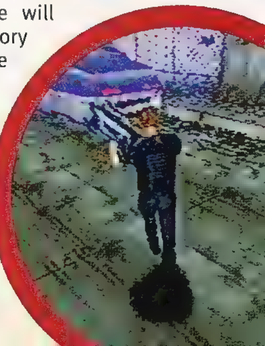
Web Address: N/A

The Fifth Element



Another movie-inspired game has arrived. The Fifth Element contains elements that will come as no surprise for many gamers. To draw a comparison, our early glimpses of the game reveal Tomb Raider-like room-to-room adventuring along with combat action reminiscent of Nightmare Creatures. Large polygonal characters romp through 3-D buildings, city streets and landscapes displayed in the ever-popular third-person perspective. Playing as Korben or Leeloo, you must do your best to rid these areas of evil forces using several combat weapons including rifles, handguns and big blasters, not to mention your dukes.

It's not clear how closely the game will follow the actual movie story line, but if it stays true to past movie-inspired games, it will shed all semblance of a plot and leave you with an all-out kill fest. Just use your imagination and pretend you're Bruce Willis...



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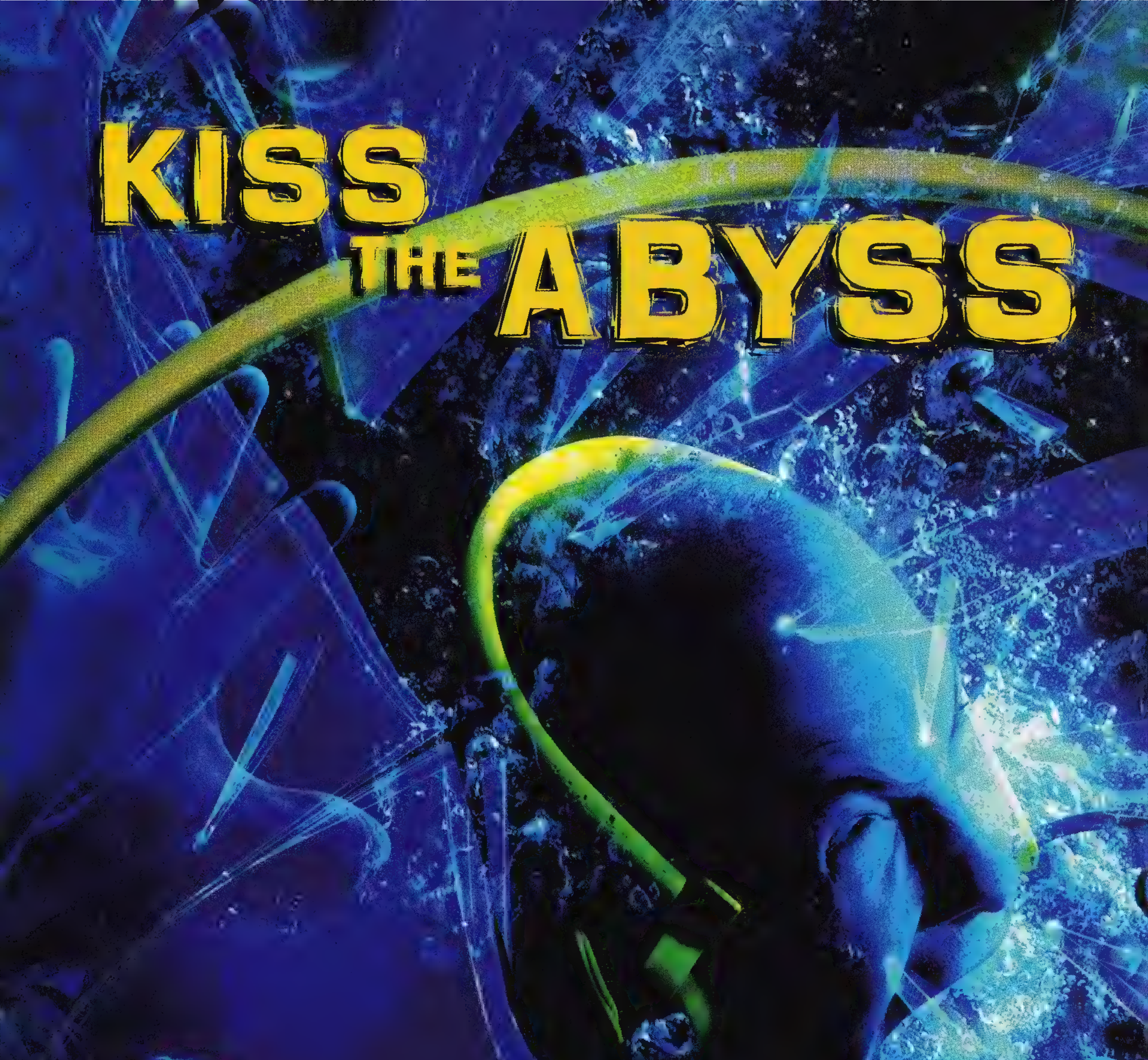
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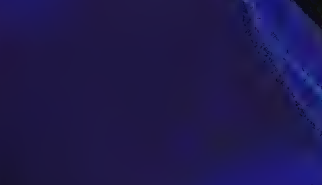
IMPLOSIVE REAL-TIME 3D GRAPHICS.


1 Pod Acquired, 4 Left
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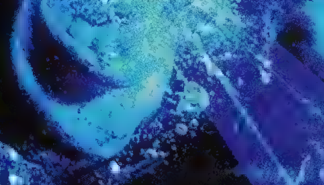
GAME MODES.

10 TOTALLY DIFFERENT
HULL-CRUSHING ENVIRONMENTS.


4 Pods Acquired, 1 Left
PIRANHA SWARMS, MAGNETIC SUCKERS,
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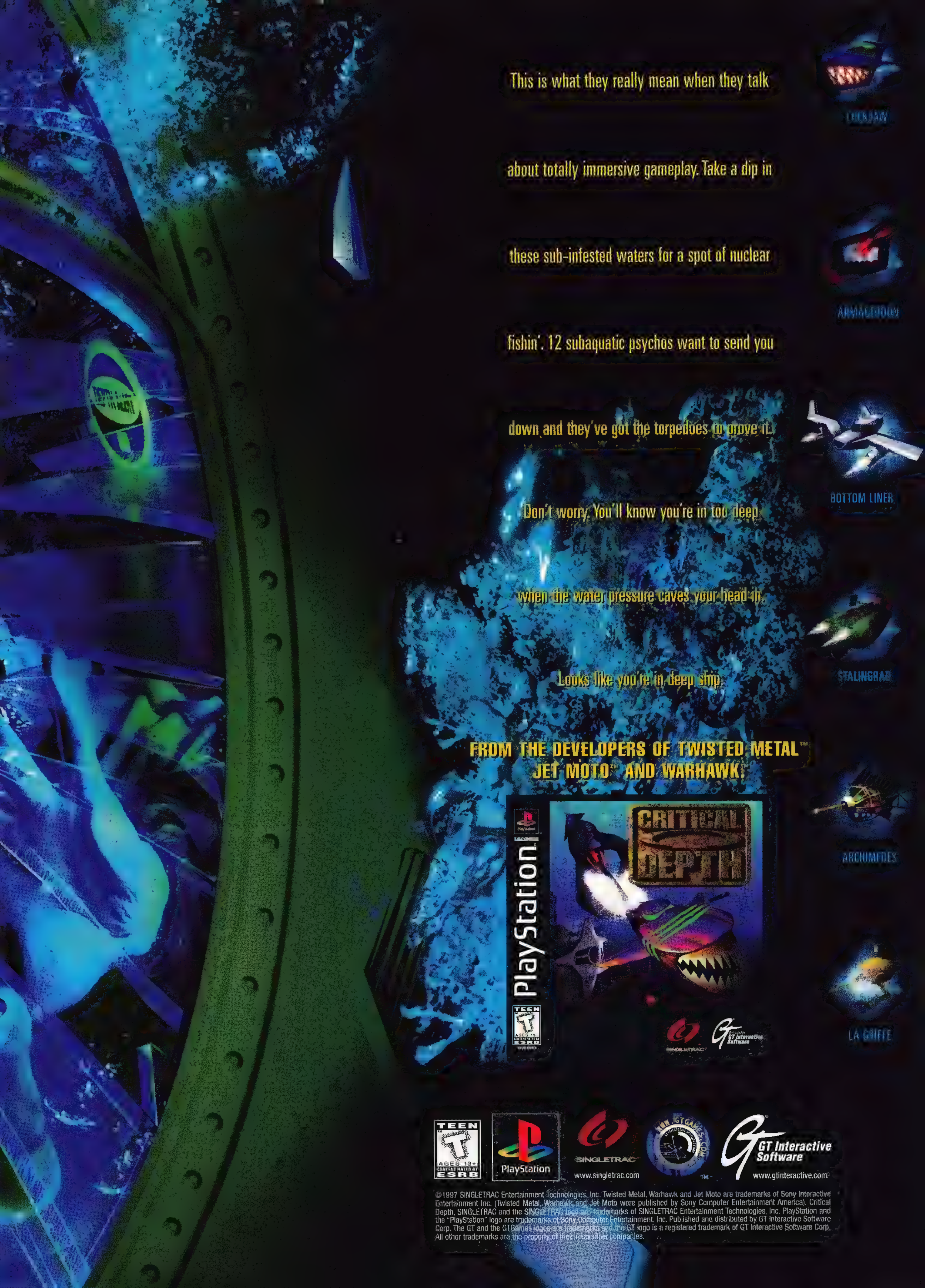
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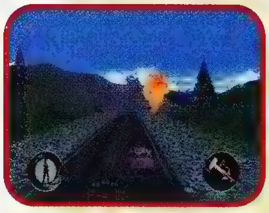
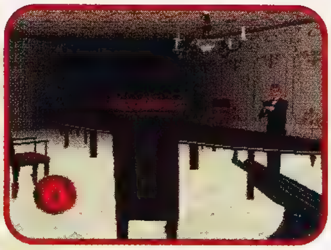
PLAYSTATION

Tomorrow Never Dies

MGM Interactive announced that it will be publishing Tomorrow Never Dies. The game begins where the movie leaves off by letting you play through an original screen-written story, while interacting with Bond-inspired characters. The action of the game is reminiscent of past James Bond movies, all of which will be meshed together with cinemas. The finished product will have at least five styles of play that include skiing, driving and fighting levels. They will be playable through first- and third-person views. TND's scheduled release is fall '98.





Arcade

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Capcom Capcom	1-2 Fighting	80	1st Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.capcom.com

Game Directory

- Rival Schools United By Fate
- Last Blade

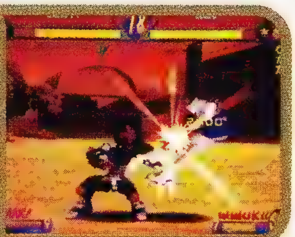
Rival Schools United By Fate

Rival Schools United By Fate is Capcom's latest 3-D fighting game. Due out the first quarter of 1998, RSUBF is the first game to run on the brand-new Capcom PS-1.5 arcade board. (It's basically an updated version of the original PS arcade board used with Star Gladiator and Street Fighter EX.)

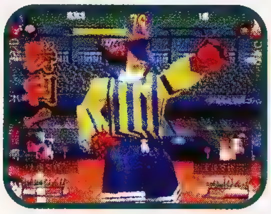
The story of RSUBF goes as such: Near the turn of the century, high school students are being mysteriously kidnapped by an unknown force. Four high schools have to fight it out to solve the mystery. The students must oppose a powerful enemy that even the police can't touch. And so they rise to the occasion to take matters into their own hands.

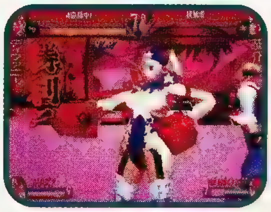
The gameplay in RSUBF is a combination (so to speak) of other popular Capcom games. The Chain Combos, Supers and Alpha counters (Tardy counters in this game) are straight out of SFA and the Team attacks reek of X-Men vs. SF. Players choose two characters from one of the four high schools, and the characters can be switched between rounds. Some of the characters range from baseball and soccer players to school teachers and a school girl bearing an uncanny resemblance to Sakura from SFA2 and SFEX.

There are 14 selectable characters and all the character artwork has been illustrated by Bengis, Capcom's top staff artist. Look for a PlayStation version of RSUBF sometime in the future.



The gameplay in RS is as fast and furious as any 2-D game.





Direct to Video

Mortal Kombat 4 has been in the arcades for a few months now, and we just heard from Midway it may come home as early as March, with home conversions of NFL Blitz and Bio-Phreaks to follow. Some companies take a little more time (Tekken 3), but for the most part, companies are still feeding off the "arcade frenzy" of a game when they announce the console release.

What can we as consumers do about this? Keep going to the arcades! Our cash support in the form of quarters will help make sure that companies will be bringing home the most (financially) popular arcade hits The home translations are almost always flawless, and they manage to add options not available in the original release

Coin-op companies don't need to worry about lost business since arcades continue to stay one step ahead of the consoles in terms of technology. They merely need to push the envelope of quality.

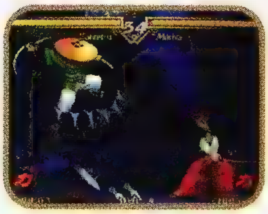
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
SNK of Japan SNK of Japan	1-2 Fighting	90	Now

Web Address: www.neogeo.co.jp

Last Blade

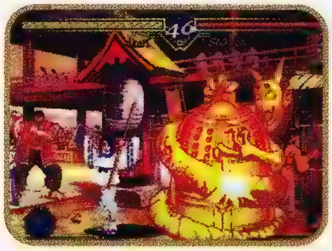
Last Blade is SNK's latest Neo•Geo offering. The gameplay is similar to Samurai Shodown with weapon-to-weapon combat and projectile attacks. It's so similar to Samurai Shodown that fans of the series should be happy with this game until SS4 hits the arcade scene.

Last Blade also features a "Rage Meter" used for stronger basic attacks and Super attacks. Each character has six basic attacks (short and long range) which are accessed with the first three buttons. The fourth button is used for the "Shadow Block" (a form of counter attack). There are 10 characters to choose from and three Boss characters.



Fans of fighting games with projectile attacks will feel right at home.

Super combos play a big part in Last Blade. That's a hell of a big bell.



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'DEATHTRAP DUNGEON' This ultimate dungeon thriller is based on the fantasy gamebook series and offers 10 tortuous levels of combat. Armed with swords, missiles, muskets, magic spells and more, you can fight solo or multi-player combat in an eerie dungeon atmosphere.
Eidos (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 1/98 PSX $46

'RESIDENT EVIL 2' Join rookie-on-the-job Leon Kennedy as he sprints through the chaos of streets littered with debris. Pursued by zombies, he must make it to the Raccoon City Police Headquarters. The headquarters equals Resident Evil's mansion in size and possesses the same creepy ambiance.
Capcom (Adventure)
Release Date: 1/98 PSX $52

'BREATH OF FIRE III' Immense environments allow viewpoint rotation to reveal hidden pathways, items, secrets and powerups. Find the secret of the Dragon shrines or become an apprentice to learn magic and special abilities
Capcom (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 1/98 PSX $44

'POWER WHEEL' was designed to bring realism and playability to the video game player. Provides smooth four direction shifting. Brake and gas pedals provide a realistic feel and are ergonomically designed to be used either sitting or standing. Steering column can be adjusted for correct height.
Game Source (Hardware)
Release Date: NOW PSX/SAT $52

'LUNAR SILVER STAR' Join Alex as he begins a quest to save Lunar from the Magic Emperor. Explore dungeons and fight terrifying monsters as you advance toward the explosive combat that will keep you challenged until the end.
Working Designs (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 2/98 SAT $46

'MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH' Three Japanese schoolgirls must save a Princess to restore peace to the land. Breathtaking animation with over 90 minutes of audio. When you talk to characters in the game, they reply!
Working Designs (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 2/98 SAT $52

'MORTAL KOMBAT:MYTHOLOGIES' The Mortal Kombat saga continues with an all new storyline. Instant playability as you take on over 30 different enemies while exploring 8 new worlds. Real-time 3D lighting, fully rendered 3D characters.

Midway (Adventure)
Release Date: NOW PSX $46, N64 $76

'DIDDY KONG RACING' While focusing on high-speed, entertaining racing action, Diddy Kong Racing also throws in the works by adding a large dose of adventure and exploration. Diddy Kong and seven other characters will race through a total of 20 beautiful 3-D courses with rivers, waterfalls, tunnels, canyons, lava, snow, rolling hills, and quiet lagoons.
Nintendo (Simulation)
Release Date: NOW N64 $54

'WARHAMMER' Become a fearless commander- painting and assembling mighty fantasy armies to do battle on the tabletop. Warhammer provides you with the core regiments of two armies, the valiant Bretonnians, and the cold-blooded Lizardmen.
Games Workshop (Board Game)
Release Date: NOW BG $65

'MAGIC THE GATHERING 5TH EDITION' This deck contains 60 tradable game cards, randomly assorted, plus a rule book. Each player must have a deck. This deck may be enhanced with more cards sold in booster packs.
Wizards of the Coast (Card Game)
Release Date: NOW CG $7

'DEADLANDS' The year is 1876, but the history is not our own. In this *Weird West* Roleplaying game, players take on the roles of hexslinging Hucksters, Mad Scientists armed with weird, steampunk gizmos, deadly Gunfighters, fearless Indian braves and wizened Shamans.
Pinnacle Entertainment (Pen/Paper RPG)
Release Date: NOW RPG $22

DEATHTRAP Dungeon
PlayStation
RESIDENT EVIL 2
PlayStation
PlayStation
LUNAR
SEGA SATURN
SEGA
RAYEARTH
SEGA SATURN
MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES
SUB-ZERO
DIDDY KONG RACING
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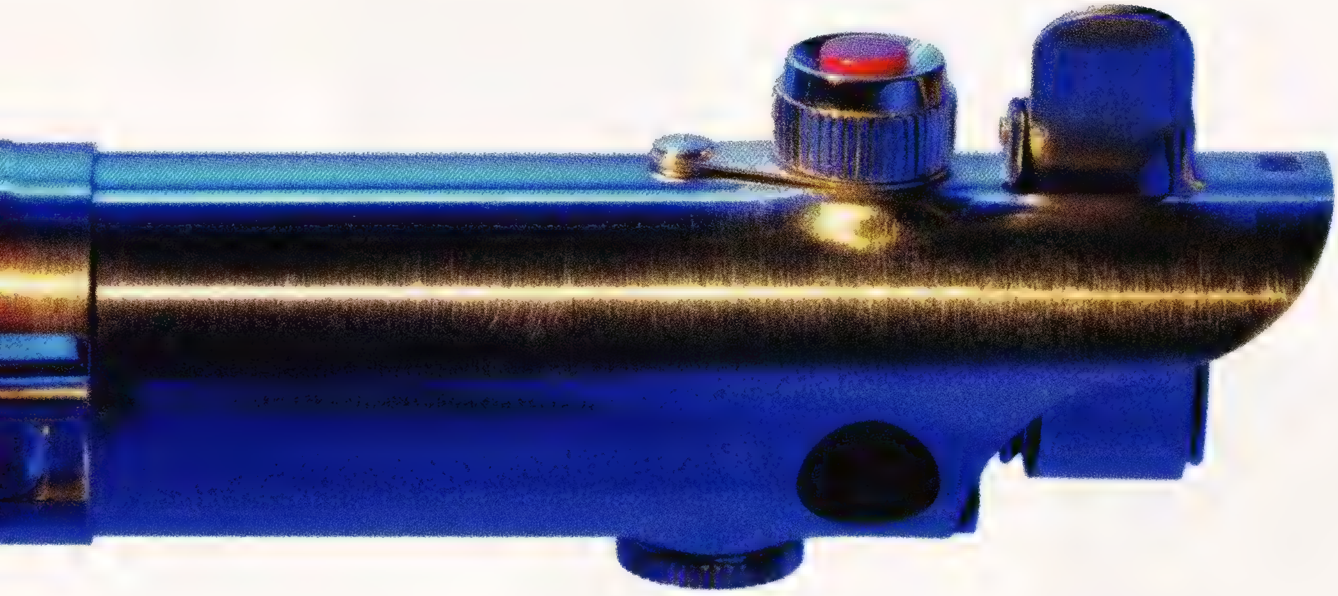

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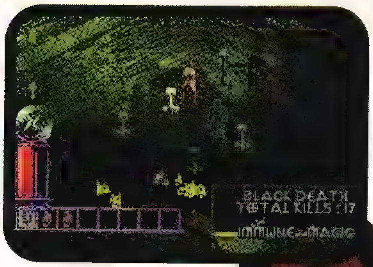
Coming soon

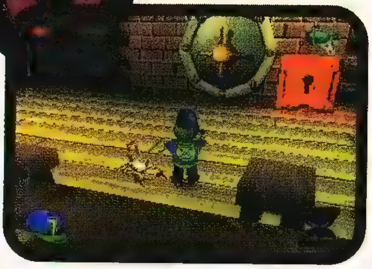
Compiled by: John Stockhausen

PLAYSTATION

Atari Collection 2	Midway	Feb.	Collection
Breath of Fire III	Capcom	Feb.	RPG
Broken Sword	T*HQ	Feb.	Adventure
Cardinal SYN	Sony Computer Entertainment	Feb.	Fighting
Dead or Alive	Tecmo	Feb.	Fighting
Klonoa	Namco	Feb.	Action
NBA In the Zone '98	Konami	Feb.	Sports
NCAA March Madness 98	EA	Feb.	Sports
Pitfall 3D	Activision	Feb.	Act/Adventure
Point Blank	Namco	Feb.	Shooter
Punky Skunk	Jaleco	Feb.	Action
Risk	Hasbro Interactive	Feb.	Simulation
Skullmonkeys	EA	Feb.	Action
X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim	Feb.	Fighting
Agent Armstrong	GT Interactive	March	Action
Blasto	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	Action
Bloody Roar	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	Fighting
C	Konami	March	Action
Clay Fighter Extreme	Interplay	March	Fighting
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	March	Act/Adventure
Diablo	EA	March	Action
Elemental Gear Bolt	Working Designs	March	Shooter
NBA Shoot Out 98	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	Sports
Newman/Haas Racing	Psygnosis	March	Racing
Rascal	Psygnosis	March	Action
Running Wild	Universal Studios	March	Racing
Saga Frontier	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	RPG
TNN Motorsports Hardcore 2	ASC Games	March	Sports
Vigilante 8	Activision	March	Action
VR Baseball 99	Interplay	March	Sports
VR Sports Powerboat Racing	Interplay	March	Sports
Wreckin' Crew	Sir Tech	March	Racing
Bass Masters Classic: PE	T*HQ	April	Sports
Crime Killer	Interplay	April	Action
Forsaken	Acclaim	April	Action
HardBall 6	Accolade	April	Sports
Jack Nicklaus Golf	Accolade	April	Sports
Mega Man Neo	Capcom	April	Action
Populous 3	EA/Bullfrog	April	Strategy
Super Motocross	Acclaim	April	Sports
WarGames	MGM Interactive	April	Action
Warhammer 2: Dark Omen	EA/Maxis	April	Strategy



One of the hottest games for the PC is finally making it to the PlayStation. Look for a full preview of this compelling dungeon game in next month's *EGM*.



Psygnosis has been known for their eye-popping visuals. Hopefully, they can bring their technical skill to their new 3-D platformer, Rascal.

NINTENDO 64

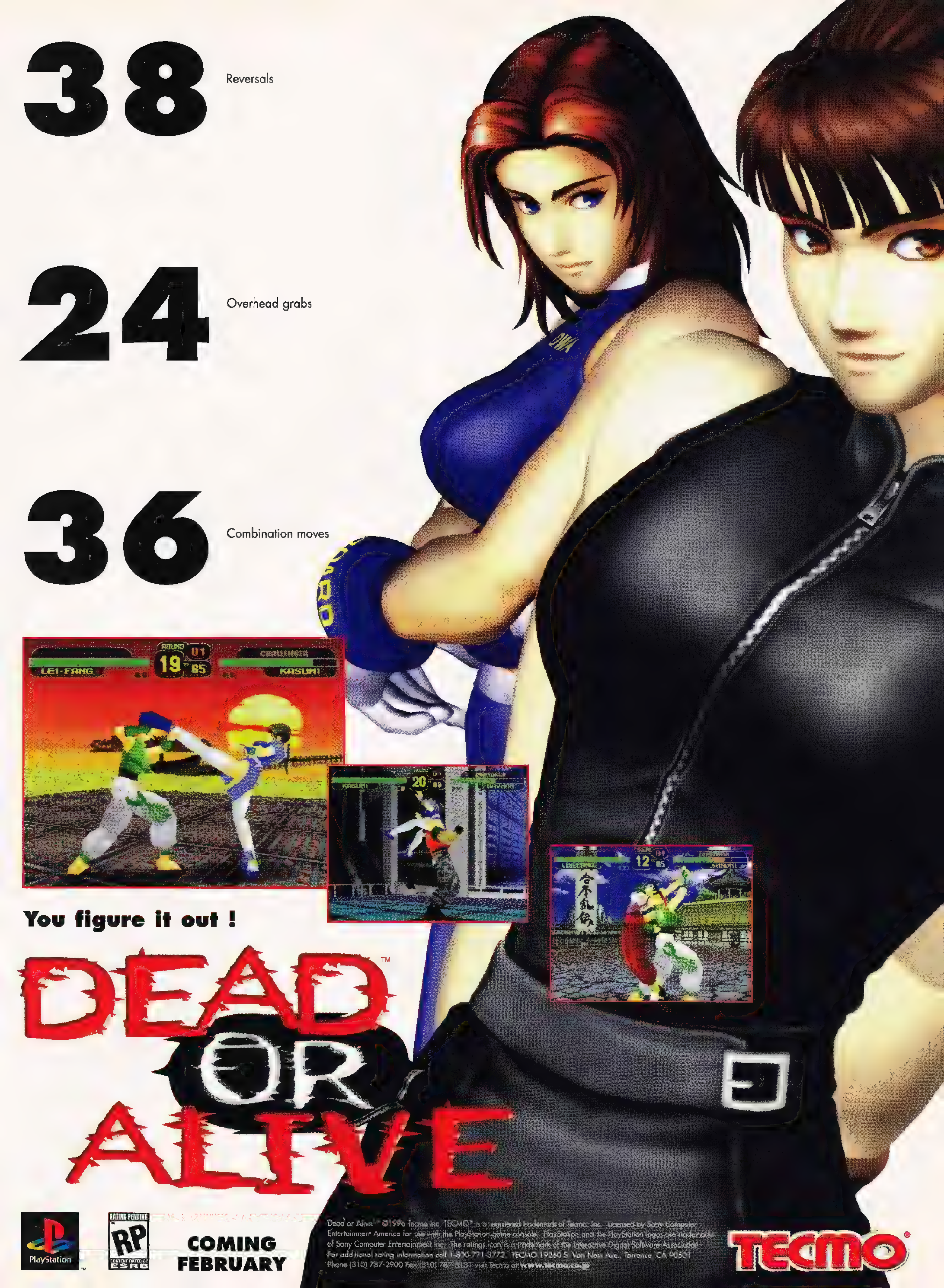
AeroGuage	ASCII	Feb.	Shooter
NBA In the Zone '98	Konami	Feb.	Sports
NHL Breakaway 98	Acclaim	Feb.	Sports
Robotron 64	Crave Entertainment	Feb.	Action
Banjo and Kazooie	Nintendo	March	Action
Conker's Quest	Rare	March	Action
GASP	Konami	March	Fighting
MLB featuring Ken Griffey Jr.	Nintendo	March	Sports
Mystical Ninja	Konami	March	Action
Quake	Midway	March	First-Person
Snowboard Kids	Atlus	March	Sports
Twisted Edge Snowboarding	Midway	March	Sports
Virtual Chess	Titus	March	Simulation
Yoshi's Story	Nintendo	March	Action
All Star BB 99	Acclaim	April	Sports
Forsaken	Acclaim	April	Action
MLB StrikeZone	GT Interactive	April	Sports
NBA Courtside	Nintendo	April	Sports
Quest 64	T*HQ	April	RPG
Snowboarding	Nintendo	April	Sports

Yoshi's Story is one of the most-anticipated platform games. Does its 2-D gameplay live up to expectations?

From the creator of NiGHTS comes Burning Rangers. This new Saturn game places you in the role of a fancy, futuristic firefighter.

SATURN

Dead or Alive	Tecmo	Feb.	Fighting
Burning Rangers	Sega	March	Action
Panzer Saga	Sega	March	Act/Adventure
House of the Dead	Sega	April	Shooter


38
Reversals
24
Overhead grabs
36
Combination moves
ROUND
01
19
65
LEI-FANG
CHALLENGER
KASUMI
20
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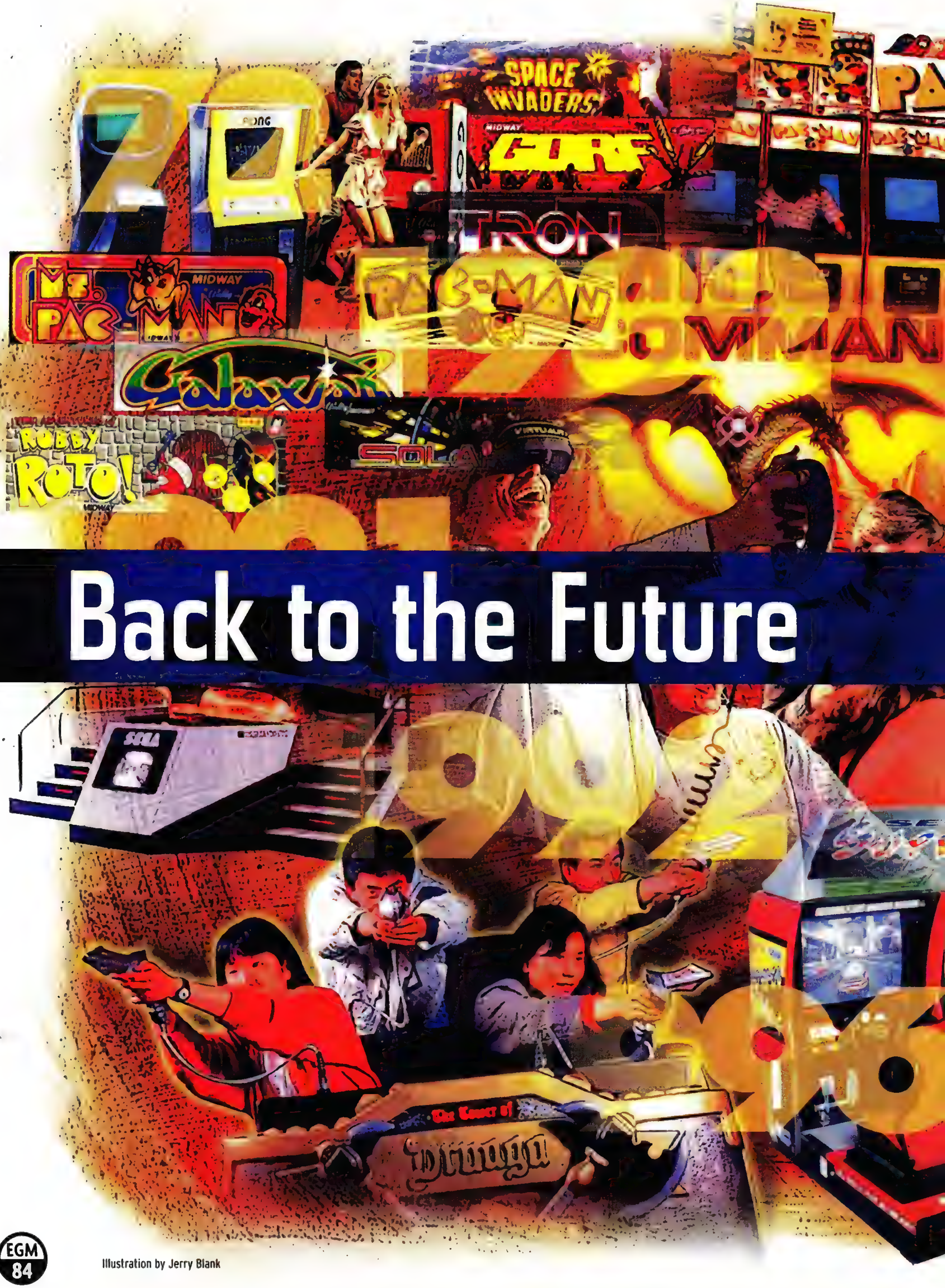
Back to the Future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MIDWAY
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OMMAN
Galaxian
ROBBY ROTO!
MIDWAY
SOLA
VIRTUAL
SEGA
The Tower of
Druaga

Illustration by Jerry Blank

EGM Takes a Time-tripping Look at the Evolution of Arcades

by Crispin Boyer

Dim lights. Rows of Defender and Joust machines. Greasy Galaga gurus in concert T-shirts. A jangled jingle of Pac-Man waka-waka and Centipede thump-thump-thump. Given the average age of an *EGM* reader, all that's the stuff of arcades back when you first caught your fingers in Missile Command's trackball, back in early '80s suburban game-room land.

Then you grew up. And so did the arcades. They grew in size, from cramped mall niches to today's arena-size "Family Entertainment Centers," as the industry calls them. They grew in content, with Final Fight sharing floor space with ticket-spitting Skee-Ball and Wack-a-Mole, as well as virtual-reality gizmos, massive ride games and bumper cars. And although the $7-billion-a-year coin-op industry has remained stagnant since the late '80s, we're seeing a boom in bigger, flashier, more expensive arcades. We're seeing 30,000-square-foot location-based entertainment (LBE) centers—another industry tag—pop up across the country, including Sega and Steven Spielberg's GameWorks centers and the immensely successful Dave & Buster's chain of arcades for adults.

Meanwhile the smaller, independent game rooms struggle to survive.

What gives? Where are all the dark, no-nonsense arcades of our junior high hangout heydays? Why does every game room pack Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter right alongside Skee-Ball, plush prizes and other seemingly opposite entertainment experiences? And are these huge LBE centers inevitable in the continuing evolution of arcades?

The answers lie in the ups and downs of the industry. They lie in the way arcade operators try to lure in mom, dad and little sis—not just the typical teenage male—over the years. They lie in the way arcadegoers seemingly yearn for a one-stop spot for all their gaming, eating and even shopping and movie-watching needs. But to get a bird's-eye view of the entire process, you have to go back—way back—to the very, very beginning.

Four Score and 10 Years Ago...

Before Pong, before pinball, before the suburbs and malls and mall arcades, there was that one breakthrough sensation that kicked off the coin-op industry, and it came way back in the 1880s.

"The first coin-operated machine that took the world by storm was called Nickel-in-the-Slot," said Marcus Webb, editor of *RePlay* magazine, the coin-op industry's main trade publication. "It was a variation on the Edison Dictaphone, and it was the forerunner of today's jukebox." These bulky machines played prerecorded songs and speeches that were stored on interchangeable tubes (the entire recording industry as we know it today was created to support the Nickel-in-the-Slot phenomenon). Although hardly hi-fi, Nickel-in-the-Slot created such a stir that listening parlors began sprouting across the country, in cities, resort areas and amusement parks. These were the granddaddies of the modern arcades, and the newborn coin-op industry boomed.

Then in 1906 came the Victrola phonograph, a $7 machine that delivered the same experience in your living room as Nickel-in-the-Slot. Suddenly it was like fast forwarding 80 years into the future, when the Nintendo Entertainment System offered gamers a cheap way to bring home pixel-perfect translations of arcade games. "The Victrola killed the Nickel-in-

Miyamoto to the Rescue

Nintendo's mega-hit Donkey Kong was actually built atop a spectacular failure—the game Radarscope, which Nintendo brought to the U.S. in 1980. It was a dud. So, to salvage the huge inventory of Radarscope machines gathering dust in a New Jersey warehouse, Nintendo charged a young staff artist named Shigeru Miyamoto with designing a game that could run on the Radarscope hardware.

His creation was Donkey Kong, which became Nintendo's first blockbuster. Yet it wasn't until 1982's Donkey Kong Jr. that the game's plumber star was named Mario, in honor of the leasing manager of Nintendo's warehouse.

the-Slot business," Webb said, "and so all these guys who had these locations ran out and got all kinds of novelty machines to fill up the place and keep attracting people, and that's where the original Penny Arcades came from." These gadgets—mostly fortune tellers, peep-show viewers, love testers and crane machines—are familiar even today, and they were so popular they spread out of the inner-city arcades and resorts into bars, tobacco shops and grocery stores.

They were also the first in a series of "Next Big Things" that kept the industry afloat through a series of broadside bashes. Pin games, pinball's flipperless precursor, drew a steady stream of down-and-out customers during 1930s Depression-era America. Pioneering companies such as Gottlieb and Bally produced most of these simple machines, just as pioneering arcades such as Playland and Sportsland began popping up in major cities. Besides pin games, these arcades featured Skee-Ball, claw games and other novelty machines, yet they were geared more toward adults, while children were sent to play in the amusement parks.

But while the industry made it through the Depression unscathed, the 1940s were another story. Across the nation, city councilmen and county commissioners—eager to combat the alleged evils of slot machines and other games of chance—began banning all coin-op amusements. "Suddenly many arcades closed their doors," said Roger Sharpe, who has been involved in the industry for more than two decades and is now Williams' director of marketing. "Some remained with just Skee-Ball types of entertainment and fortune tellers and the like."

But arcade owners had little time to worry about the ill effects of city ordinances. America's need for World War II war machines delivered what at the time seemed the coin-op industry's death blow. "The majority of manufacturers during the war wound up changing over their production lines from games to building war materials, bomb sites and the like," Sharpe said. By the mid-'40s, coin-op-machine manufacturing was nonexistent, and arcades nationwide closed their doors as business nosedived to an all-time low.

After WWII and the Korean War ended, the few companies still able to manufacture coin-op games, as well as the few surviving arcades—the Playlands, amusement parks and resort game rooms—were rewarded with another innovation that jumpstarted the dying industry: the pinball flipper, which brought about pinball as we know it today. Through the '50s and '60s, pinball became the most important machine in coin-op, with new arcades opening across the country to ride this new tide of success. But even more monumental was something that had been brewing since the close of WWII, when babies began booming and families started craving more space than cramped cities could provide. The history teachers call it suburban sprawl, and with it came the retail fortresses that defined suburbia.

"Suddenly you have the phenomenon of the shopping mall," Sharpe said, "and by the early and mid-1970s, what the shopping mall became was the place to go not only to shop but also for entertainment. Most malls built movie theaters. Many started to increase and improve their food services, so you wound up with the phenomenon of food courts." The bright idea of sticking arcades in malls, of wedging them between the multiplex and the

Girl Power

Atari's Centipede was the first arcade game to attract more women than men. So maybe it's no small coincidence that it was also the first arcade game designed by a woman—Dona Bailey, who created the insect-blasting masterpiece with Ed Logg.

Bad Dreams, Man

When Dave Theurer, the creator of Missile Command, set out to design Tempest (originally called Vortex), he wanted it to be a first-person take on the Space Invaders formula. But no one at Atari seemed keen on the prototype game he'd come up with. After struggling with some other concepts, Theurer was unsure of his project's future.

Then he received a creative boost from an unlikely source—a nightmare. In it, creatures were clawing up at him from a tunnel in the earth, and as hard as he tried he couldn't defend against them. The next day, he went into the lab and soon had a similar scene playing out on the game screen. His nightmare had become Tempest, considered by many as one of the greatest arcade games of all time.

indoor McDonald's, seemed a no-brainer. Sure enough, arcades migrated into the malls' climate-controlled interiors at the beginning of the '70s.

Pinball was still the primary draw, but other, more sophisticated machines such as shooting galleries, bowling games, air hockey and elaborate electromechanical devices that had players controlling model planes or driving race cars also snatched quarters. The game rooms were so successful that arcade chains began their mall-to-mall expansion, with the Time Out centers starting in New York, Bally's Aladdin's Castle spreading through the Midwest and Sega's Kingdom of Oz opening on the West Coast.

And then, in 1972, a strange-looking coin-op called Pong—developed by a newly formed company named Atari—began raking in quarters at a Sunnyvale, Calif. bar.

The Golden Age...

Pong wasn't the first coin-operated video game (that honor goes to Computer Space), but it was the first whose popularity went supernova. Video games joined the pin game and the pinball flipper as the Next Big Thing in the coin-op industry. "Here was this introduction of a totally different technology that never existed before," Sharpe said. "It brought a whole new generation of people curious to see how they could interact with the TV screen."

Pong's stellar success was followed by hit after arcade hit. Taito's Space Invaders. Atari's Asteroids. Namco's Pac-Man. Williams' Defender. Nintendo's Donkey Kong. Sega's Frogger. "There was a lot of innovation at that time, and games were simple because of the technology," said Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari and widely considered to be the father of the coin-op video game industry. "That meant the games were very inclusive to people from a broad walk of life, because there wasn't any built-in learning curve."

Bushnell banked on this all-inclusive nature of video games in 1978, when he purchased the Pizza Time Theater franchise (after selling Atari to Warner Communications). With its mix of animatronic animals, greasy pizza, birthday parties, Skee-Ball, plush prizes and video games, this new breed of arcade broke the mold of the darkened mall game room. Bushnell's franchise was an immediate hit that soon grew to nearly 300 locations.

Although Pizza Time Theater (later renamed Chuck E. Cheese's) spawned several clones, most of the arcade industry wasn't ready to copy the chain's conventions yet. Everyone was doing just fine as they were. By 1981, arcades had sprung up in just about every mall, many with rows of the same game. They were making money, lots of it, more than the coin-op industry had ever seen. The arcades earned $5 billion in revenues in '81, while the coin-op industry as a whole brought in $7.25 billion. It was bigger than the movie and record industry combined, and it was way bigger than the $1 billion-a-year coin-op market of only a half-decade before.

Then the whole thing went to hell.

Crash Course...

Something bad happened to arcades in 1982: People stopped going. In one year, the coin-op industry's revenues shrank by $3 billion. Suddenly, there were too many game rooms, not enough gamers. "By '82, the shooting match is over," said Steve Kent,

Invasion of the Coin-Abducting Aliens

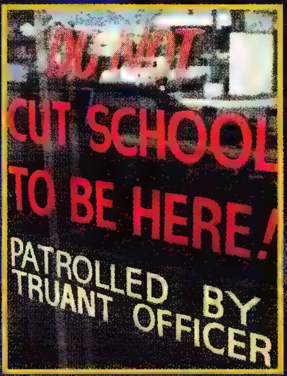
Taito's Space Invaders became an instant hit in Japan, where the game was so popular that soon after its release, the Japanese treasury department was hit with a mysterious shortage of 100-yen coins. Turns out the coins were all inside Space Invaders machines. In fact, the game became so popular that Taito had to make its deliveries at night in unmarked trucks to protect the coin-ops from theft.

SPACE INVADERS

The dim, teen-infested interiors of early-'80s arcades were the stuff parents loved to loathe (just as they feared letting little Johnny into the seedy pinball parlors of the '50s). But with business booming, game rooms in 1981 saw no reason to change.

SHAKE WITH UNCLE SAM

Not exactly Mortal Kombat, early arcade machines were a bizarre lot of strength testers, fortune tellers and other gizmos that delivered novel thrills for about a penny a pop.



JIM'S RESTAURANT

1:30 PM.

BRISTOL, ENGLAND -- AS CONAL WILMOT EXPLAINS IT, "I SEE HER EVERYWHERE... IN THE PUB, THE SHOPS AND ONCE, RIGHT THERE NEXT TO ME IN THE LOO. BUT THEN, I TURN MY HEAD AND SHE'S GONE." CONAL'S MOM THINKS HE'S "PLAIN BARKING MAD." HIS BEST BUDDY MICK JUST WISHES IT WOULD HAPPEN TO HIM.

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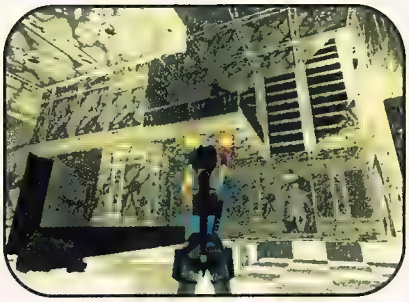

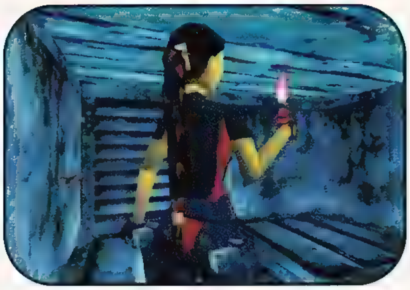

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Inset photo (above): Without warning, tea time becomes TR II time.

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CORE

author of Electronic Nation, a forthcoming book on the industry's history. "The big arcades and the tiny ones were the first to go. The big guys disappeared because people just weren't interested in going to arcades. And then the spillover, the folks who didn't go to the big arcades would go to the smaller ones, and that was enough to keep them in business for another six months."

Over the next two years, the coin-op industry continued to slide into oblivion. Even Bushnell's Chuck E. Cheese's chain went bust in 1985, when it was purchased by ShowBiz Pizza Time. So why did all the self-proclaimed "Vidiots" who lined up for Pac-Man, Asteroids and Defender a few years before suddenly give game rooms the cold shoulder? Some industry observers think the coin-op video game was simply a fad that had run its course. Others say the arcade's early-'80s downfall was tied to the equally disastrous crash of the home console industry.

"The nail in the coffin was the public's perception that video games were over, and that was all due to the crash of the home market," said Keith Feinstein, president of the video game museum Videotopia. "There was all this news coverage of Atari collapsing in on itself, and Warner reporting huge losses. Then along comes the Cabbage Patch Doll. That's the big Christmas gift and the next big story, and that translated into people saying all video games are done."

Arcade operators once again began the quest for the Next Big Thing to lure back their shrinking audience. Laser disc games provided a brief resurgence in 1983, thanks to the success of Don Bluth's animated dungeon romp Dragon's Lair. But it wasn't enough—especially when the Nintendo Entertainment System debuted in 1985 and brought true-to-the-arcade games home.

Game rooms had to reinvent themselves, or die. "There was an actual summit meeting of some leading industry figures in San Antonio," Sharpe explained. "They coined the phrase Family Entertainment Center, making sure the word family was in there so it would be easier to sell. But more importantly, they promoted the idea that the classic county-fair skill game, the shooting games, Skee-Ball, etc., were updated electronically and brought into arcades. They were called redemption games, and you added the element of winning tickets and redeeming them for prizes."

And so even the mall arcades began adopting Chuck E. Cheese's family-friendly tactics, bringing in cheap toy prizes, Skee-Ball and other ticket games, as well as a younger audience. Many even began hosting birthday parties in their cramped interiors. The game rooms put on their happy faces. They brightened up and became more kiddie friendly, leaving fewer and fewer teens to pick game rooms as their after-school hangouts of choice. And although no redemption machine ever brought in the $900-per-week profits of a hit arcade game, they did earn a steady flow of tokens that kept arcades going through the lean years of the middle and late '80s.

The game room goldrush of 1981 would never return. But the industry would see another spike in business soon enough, when

The Tron Competition

When Bally/Midway designed Tron, it arranged a competition between groups of its own designers to see who could come up with the best concept for the game. One design team planned a complex first-person vector-graphics game to mirror the environments of the film. A second group opted to use established Midway technology to play a collection of five minigames, which were based on different scenes from the movie.

In the end, the management went with the concept based on tried-and-true technology, since it had the best chance of being completed by the deadline. Incidentally, the fifth minigame had to be dropped from this design due to time and technological constraints, but it was reborn later with better hardware as the game's sequel, Discs of Tron.

Arcades wanted to be more than just game rooms in the mid-'80s. So in came the fast food, the birthday parties and a broader audience. Family entertainment centers were born.

in 1991 two Dragon Punching dudes named Ken and Ryu opened another chapter in arcade history—and some say nearly closed the book.

The Curse of Street Fighter II...

To hear Atari Games Game Director James Goddard tell it, the arcade scene was mighty lame in the early 1990s. Of course, we all know that; we were there, dropping tokens into Final Fight, N.A.R.C., WWF Superstars and not much else. Then Capcom released a sequel to its 1987 game Street Fighter. "Here comes Street Fighter II, and all of a sudden there's four people around it," Goddard said, "and this game opened up a sports-club mentality in arcades with its head-to-head competition. It had the whole macho thing going. Next thing you know, there's six people around it. Then there's eight people. Then there's two machines. Then there's 16 people playing it on a Wednesday night. Then there are three machines."

Goddard should know his Street Fighter history. He worked for Capcom between 1991 and '93 as co-designer and U.S. producer of the Champion Edition and Hyper Fighting upgrades. He also created the character Dee Jay in Super SFII (not coincidentally, Goddard's nickname is DJames).

"All of a sudden, the arcade operator is looking at a machine that cost $1,600 that can earn $300 to $900 a week for eight months," Goddard said. "A $200 upgrade comes out and he can get another eight or nine months. That's huge. People are buying houses off the kind of money they're making from those machines." It's not surprising then that arcade owners wanted more of this newest Next Big Thing, and Capcom was only happy to oblige with upgrades (released in part to combat the illegal "Rainbow Edition" upgrades that less-scrupulous arcade operators jacked into their SFII machines).

Meanwhile, Midway's Mortal Kombat put its own bloody spin on the SFII formula, and it, too, was a hit. "Suddenly, there are two camps of fanatics for two series, both fighting games, that are earning outrageous amounts of money," Goddard said. "Now the arcade operator is going, 'Wow, I gotta have more fighting games!' At that point at Capcom there was this mentality of, 'Well, heck, let's just pimp the series!' That's when we asked, 'Is this right? Will this be a problem?' And sure enough, it was a problem for Capcom."

In 1992, Super SFII hit an arcade scene clogged with fighting game clones, as well as gamers who were loyal to one series or another, but not eager to pump tokens into every new game that came along. Super SFII was a dud compared to its predecessors, and arcade operators began scrambling for the next winning fighting-game variation. They found it in Virtua Fighter and Killer Instinct and Tekken, but none of these could bring back the 16-person-to-a-machine crowds of 1991. Those days, just like the big money boom of a decade before, were over.

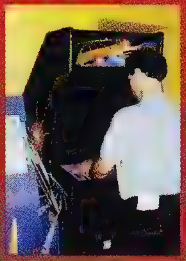
So just as SFII, for a brief time, recharged the industry, it also bred a shrinking audience, a core of die-hard gamers who are so lethal at the art of video game hand-to-hand combat that no newbies would dare challenge them. "I like to say that Mortal Kombat III was only fun if you had a Ph.D. in Mortal Kombat," Bushnell said of the fighting genre's ill effects. "What this does is it tends to narrow the market. People who go into the arcades, a lot of the games developed today are for them specifically, not for Joe

Deep Dish Pac-Man

During the heyday of the arcade shoot-'em-up (Space Invaders, Asteroids, Missile Command, etc.), a young game designer at Namco named Moru Iwatani decided to create a game that was non-violent and appealing to women as well as men. He settled on a maze-type game with enemies that were fashioned after mop-heads. But when it came time to design the game's hero, he was stumped.

Over dinner one night, Iwatani gazed at a pizza with a single slice removed, and suddenly he had the idea for his main character—a simple yellow circle with a slice missing. Pac-Man was born, and it went on to become one of the most successful arcade games of all time.

The Asteroids "Lurker"



A favorite high-scoring technique for Atari's 1979 arcade blockbuster Asteroids was to eliminate all but one small space rock, then sit and wait for the UFOs, picking them off one by one. This technique was called "lurking," and adept lurkers could tie up a machine for hours on a single quarter.

When Atari released Asteroids Deluxe in 1981, it was suddenly open season for lurkers. The designers improved the UFOs' aim, as well as unleashed hexagonal pods, which drifted about and fragmented into smaller ships when shot. These little guys would then hunt the player's spaceship.

Jobs' First Job

Atari's Breakout, the ultimate evolution of the Pong style arcade game, was designed by a young Atari employee named Steve Jobs, who would often call on his friend Steve Wozniak to lend a hand with technical problems or just come down to the lab to play games. During Breakout's design process, Jobs and Wozniak began cooking up the idea of creating a personal computer. The two even went to Nolan Bushnell with the idea, but Atari was experiencing "growing pains," and Bushnell didn't think it wise to risk branching into another business.

Jobs and Wozniak built a prototype computer with parts "borrowed" from the Breakout project. The computer was called the Apple I, and its successors went on to become the most influential personal computers in history. In fact, there is rarely a video game made today that hasn't felt that influence, either in the design of the game and its artwork or in the make-up of its hardware.

Sixpack and not for the guy on the street."

Of course, other genres—namely driving and shooting—have grown in popularity to make up for the wane of the fighting game (note the coin-op blockbusters Cruis'n USA and Daytona USA). Still, profits from video game coin-ops have remained stagnant—and, in some cases, declined. "Williams announced an 18 percent loss in its arcade and pinball division over last year," said Ian Berman, an industry analyst with Frost and Berman, "while Konami announced a 10 percent loss in its arcade division. Everybody's complaining in the last 12 months how much the industry has dropped in the number of quarters being spent and in sales of equipment."

Part night club, part game room, the Sega GameWorks centers try to offer something for everybody. Check next month for an on-location report.

Meanwhile, the home console market is expected to show a more than 40 percent jump in revenues this year over '96. Such a boom only makes sense, considering that the Saturn, PlayStation and Nintendo 64 are pumping out arcade-quality games at home. It's like 1985 all over again, when the NES debuted and made life even more difficult for the already beleaguered arcade operator. Once again, game rooms must evolve. "They have to come up with ways to prove that you get something from going to arcades that you wouldn't get from staying home," Kent said. "It can be done. That's what Namco did best when they came out with Alpine Racer. All of a sudden you saw this game and said, 'Wow, this is something I could never do at home.' Unless of course you're Steven Spielberg."

Thinking Big...

MIDWAY
T2
TERMINATOR 2
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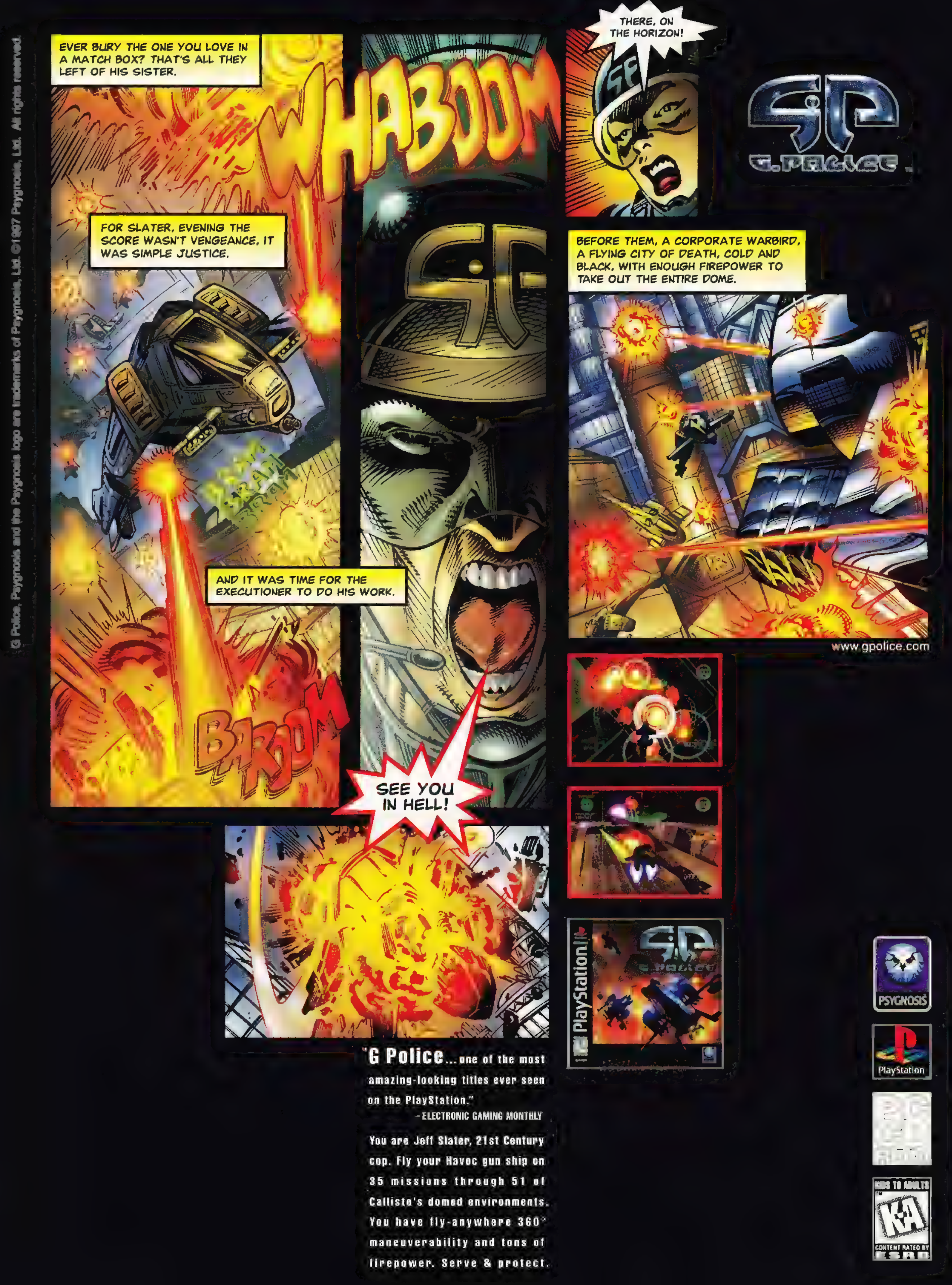
And if you're Spielberg, you build the prototype for the next generation of arcades. Spielberg's GameWorks—a joint venture of DreamWorks SKG, Sega and Universal Studios—typifies these 30,000-square-foot arcades for adults. In theory, the LBE centers offer everything: a club atmosphere, VR-type games and the newest arcade hits—including linked Super GTs and Lost World—that smaller arcades just can't afford (some machines cost upward of $20,000 apiece). Most LBEs are within walking distance of movie theaters and shopping centers, the idea being that guests need never trek elsewhere for their weekly dose of entertainment. And with the notoriety of GameWorks and the success of the 12-location Dave & Buster's arcade chain, other big players—including Sony, Disney and Namco—are lining up to play the LBE game.

But are these mega arcades living up to their hype? And how can the smaller game rooms survive when faced with super-expensive arcade hardware designed for the big boys? That's for the second half of this feature, which you can catch next month, when we scout out the LBE centers for an on-location report, as well as look at the options of the small arcades (which are recently finding unlikely allies in the PC industry).

Big doings are most certainly ahead for arcades. And to hear some industry observers speak, it's as if the coin-op scene is morphing once again, just as it did when the Victrola killed the listening parlor and Nolan Bushnell's Pong transformed the pinball parlor into today's video arcade. "I think that computer-driven social experiences were fairly limited up until recently, and those were called video arcade games," said Carl Goodman, curator of the Digital Media exhibit at the American Museum of the Moving Image in Austoria, N.Y. "Now with these LBE centers, you have many more computer-driven social experiences that take what was going on with arcade games many steps further. We're only at the beginning of these sorts of experiences, and I just don't think we're going to call them arcade games, and we're not going to call the places in which they are played arcades."

Southern California's Sunnyvale Golfland offers miniature golf to draw in more customers. But since this famous arcade is the prime testing site for new games from Capcom, Namco, SNK and others, it hardly needs the extra help.

Editor's Note: Special thanks to Keith Feinstein for providing many of this feature's pictures and info on the games themselves. Feinstein is the president of Videotopia, a traveling exhibit on video game history that showcases more than 300 vintage and recent coin-op games, as well as the home systems. Check Videotopia's Web site (www.videotopia.com) to see if the exhibit will be appearing at a museum near you.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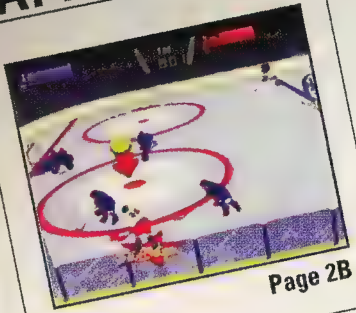
Sports

The National News

Tuesday, February 3, 1998

AT A GLANCE



Page 2B

FEATURES

- Real players and player attributes.
- Medals, ceremonies and Olympic-size rink give you the ultimate Olympic experience.
- Set and save your Olympic records.
- Create your own player, put yourself on a team and lead them to glory.

Page 3B

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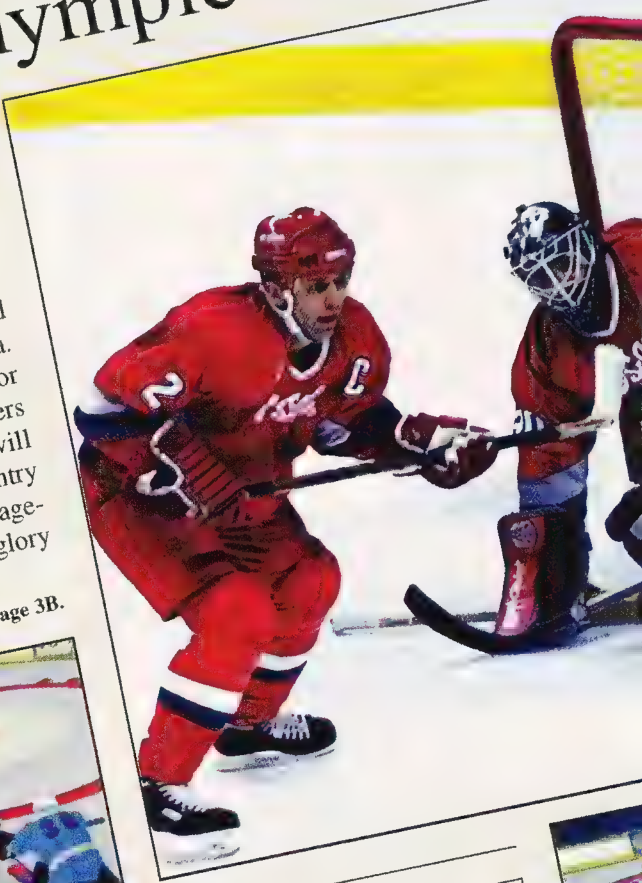
Page 3B

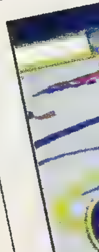
World Peace Treaty

All Global Rivalries Put Off Nagano Olympic Hockey To

For the first time in history, NHLPA™ pros are descending upon the Olympic Winter Games. Be a witness as former teammates go head to head. Kamensky and Yashin are headed for Russia. Kariya and Roy will be playing for Canada. Modano and Leetch are in for the United States. The rosters are real. The graphics will make you sweat. It's country against country in this engagement. And the price of glory isn't gonna be pretty.

Please see Hockey on Page 3B.





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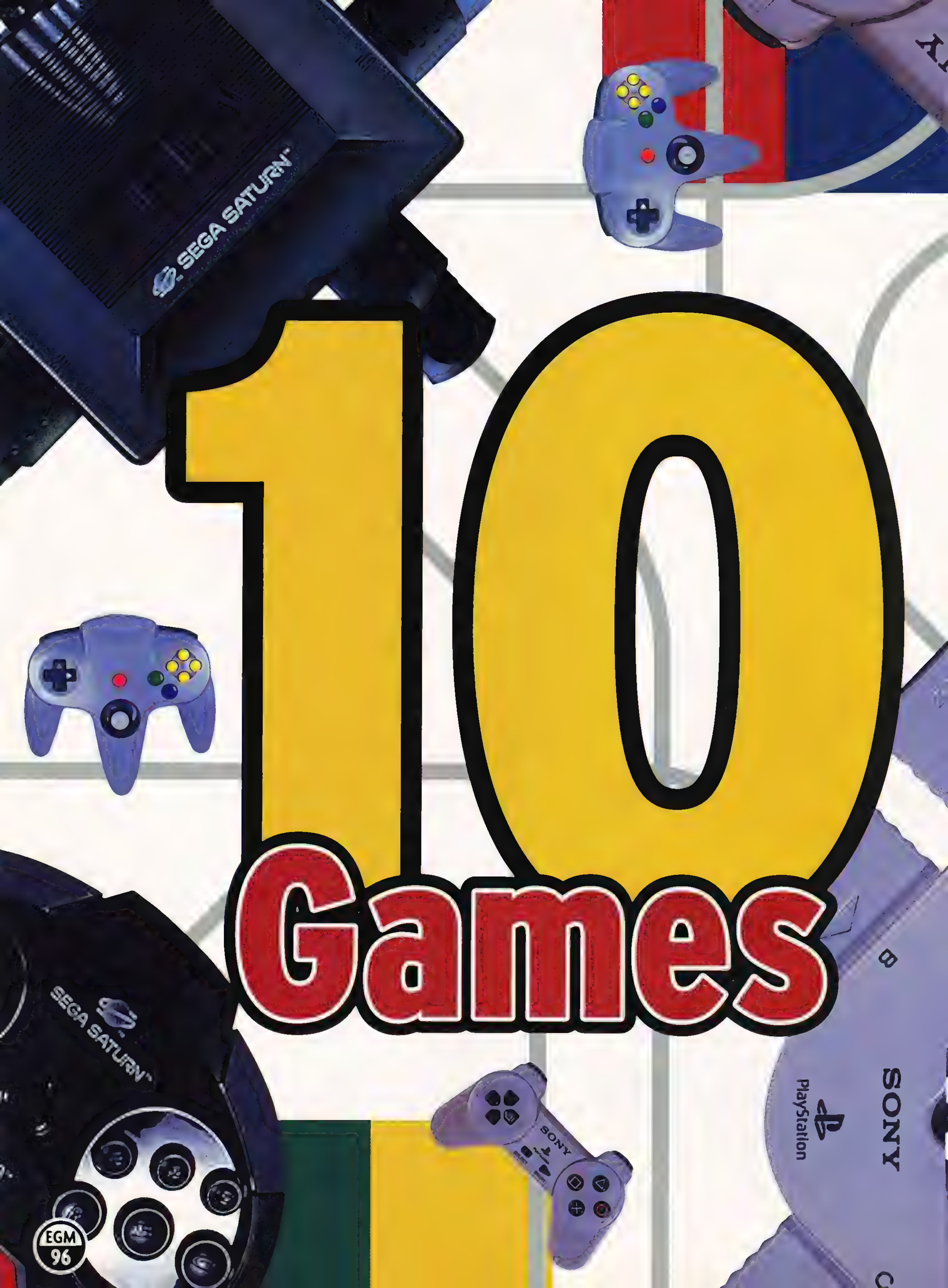

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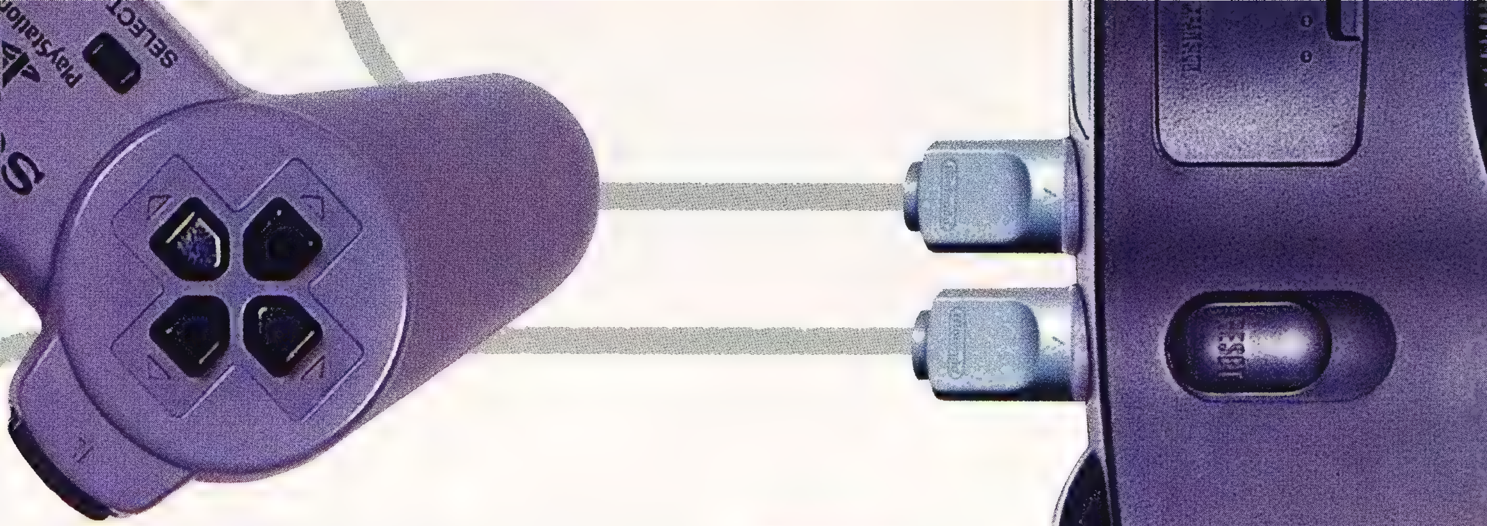

You Should Not Play Alone

by Kraig Kujawa

While the Internet has become a popular conduit for multiplayer PC games, there's no substitute for being able to sit around the television set and play games in your living room with a bunch of friends. This "social" gaming is one of the biggest strengths of console systems and responsible for their popularity today.

Nowadays, just about every game has a Multiplayer Mode of some sort, but only a few are really designed with multiplayer action in mind. Great multiplayer titles incorporate gameplay elements that keep them fresh and replayable. They also usually support more than two players, although there are the outstanding exceptions. Think about some of the great multiplayer games that continue to captivate their players sequel after sequel: Bomberman, Street Fighter, Madden and NBA Live. All possess that special element that keeps gamers coming back for more—even if the sequels aren't much different from the ones before it.

Multiplayer games are such a large part of our gaming diet that we decided to list 10 of the best ones that really shine. They are titles that won't get stale, and for the most part, more than two players can get in on the action at once. Some of these games are so skewed toward competitive gameplay that they really aren't even much fun to play by yourself. So gather your multitaps, extra controllers and plug your console into a large TV. These are the 10 best multiplayer games you can find on the next-generation systems.

10. International SuperStar Soccer 64

(Nintendo 64)

The Game:
Oh, it's only the best soccer game ever—number 24 on *EGM*'s Top 100 List, for those keeping score at home.

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
Soccer games are much more exciting in multiplayer because great goals demand great teamwork. There's no better play than when your teammate passes you the ball, and you finish the job with a sweet goal.

How We Like To Play:
ISS 64 doesn't have many modes of play, and frankly, just using all four of the N64 controller ports is good enough.

Best Excuse For Giving Up a Goal:
Shoddy goalie A.I. It's never your fault—it's the poor goalie's. They make great scapegoats for sore losers.

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ISS
CSOKEN
MAJOR A
FW 9
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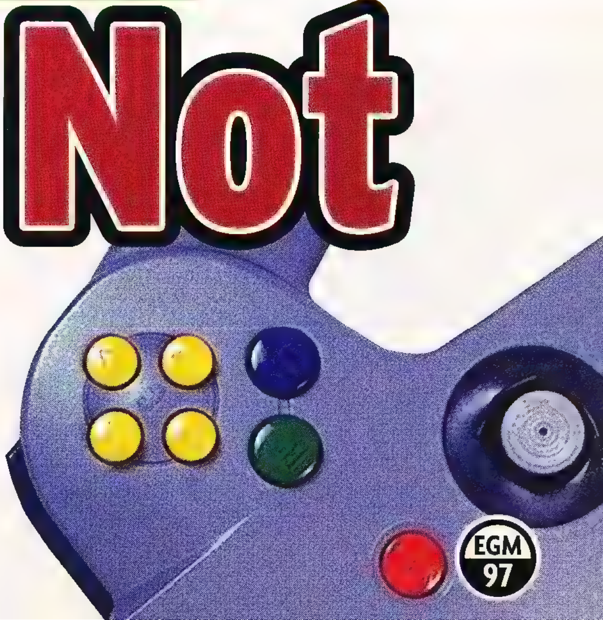


The Next Step in Multiplayer Gaming

The future of multiplayer gaming—and we're talking beyond when Diablo hits the PlayStation—is becoming more clear as console manufacturers start to provide some clues into what we'll be playing in years to come. One common denominator that we know about each new console system is that they will most likely embrace multiplayer gaming over the Internet. Sega's new system is embracing PC architecture and, probably, its connectivity. Nintendo's forthcoming 64DD has been confirmed to have a modem, and what little has leaked about Sony's PlayStation 2 suggests that they plan on taking a similar route.

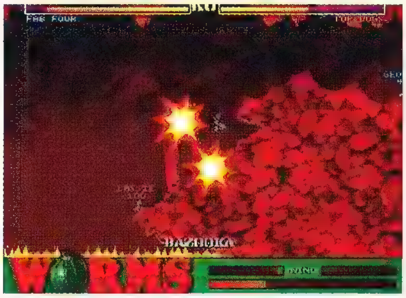
While any further speculation on the future consoles is just that, it is safe to surmise that companies know that multiplayer gaming over phone lines will be a "killer app." Presumably, they intend on exploiting it in the next, next generation of gaming consoles.

9. Worms

(PlayStation/Saturn)

The Game:
Worms is one of the most underrated multiplayer games, but it has a strong cult following. You control a well-armed team of worms who position themselves along a large, 2-D landscape. Killing the other team involves strategy and understanding the subtleties of your weapon's physics, not twitch gameplay.

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
Worms is a perfect example of an average one-player game that also delivers an excellent multiplayer contest. The game is much more interesting when you outwit your buddy by skillfully bouncing a grenade in his worm's cubbyhole and blow him to bits.



How We Like To Play:
Having a lot of different teams can really encourage backstabbing. The player with the most remaining worms at the end of the game usually winds up with everyone else teaming against him—at least until his troops are worn down to their level.

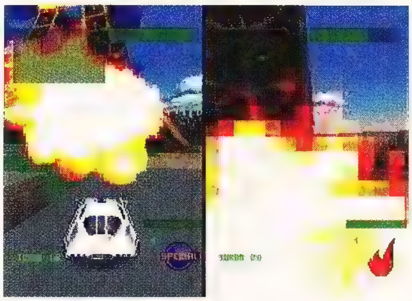
Did You Know?:
Sony tried to stop the release of Worms because it was 2-D. Back when the PlayStation was still young, Sony was adamant that games on their system looked "next-generation," which to them meant 3-D. Thankfully, Worms finally crawled onto the PlayStation.

8. Twisted Metal 2

(PlayStation)

The Game:
Just about everyone loved wrecking their Hot Wheels when they were a kid, and Twisted Metal 2 allows you to revisit and indulge those childish urges in this wonderful, carnage-filled sequel.

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
When you play the Single-player Mode, it's a lot of dumb vehicles versus you. The action is much more intense in a one-on-one battle where your combatant is smarter than the computer (he/she is smarter, right?).



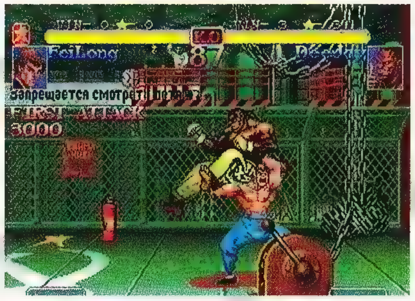
How We Like To Play:
Cruisin' around Paris and destroying the Eiffel Tower is good multiplayer fun. Even better, when it falls, it forms a bridge. That way, destroying the Eiffel Tower doesn't make you look like such a bad guy. The only other level nearly as entertaining is Hong Kong, complete with subways.

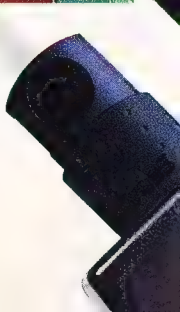
Cheap Way To Play:
Use the car Spectre. Keep away from your opponent and pepper him with the homing missiles that go through walls. That's really annoying—and deadly.

7. Street Fighter Collection

(PlayStation/Saturn)

The Game:
Super Street Fighter II, Super Street Fighter II Turbo, Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold—three great 2-D fighting games, one inexpensive compilation that will satisfy any fighting game fan.





SONY
PlayStation
POWER
OPEN

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
One-on-one fighting games capture the true competitive spirit in all gamers. Nothing is more satisfying than mercilessly beating your friends into a bloody pulp...in a Street Fighter game, that is.

How We Like To Play:
EGM Street Fighter rules are simple: handicaps off, the winner can continue playing and don't reconfigure the buttons. Cheese wins, ticks (throwing someone when they're blocking) and tap-throws are grounds for a real-life beating by the staff. Heck, we just look for excuses to give staff members a real-life thrashing.

Why Didn't Capcom...:
...include the original Street Fighter II? Or Championship Edition? Or our office favorite, Hyper Fighting? The compilation, although excellent, doesn't feel complete.

6. Point Blank

(PlayStation)

The Game:
Point Blank is a simple and colorful potpourri of dozens of light-gun minigames.

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
If you have two Guncons, a few friends and Point Blank, then you have a party. All types of gamers love Point Blank: young or old, male or female. Two can play at one time, both competitively (trying to outscore each other) and cooperatively (trying to reach a common goal). Even eight people can compete on two teams of four. With the variety Point Blank offers in gameplay, you can't help but have fun.

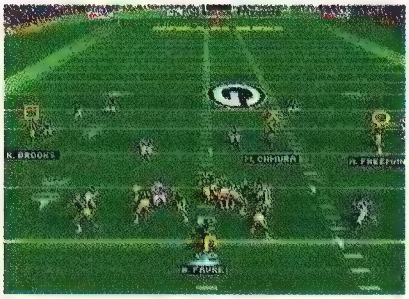
How We Like To Play:
For some reason, Crispin and Shoe invented the "Quick Draw" technique to keep them entertained between Point Blank minigames. When it comes time to pick the next level, the two players must draw and shoot at their desired stage. This way, the faster hand gets to pick the next minigame.

But That Sounds Kinda Lame...:
It is, but the game itself isn't. Don't forget, Crispin and Shoe are easily entertained (and they invented this idea over a couple of brewskis at Dave & Buster's).

5. Madden NFL 98

(PlayStation)

The Game:
This is by far the most realistic football game on the market. It also happens to have the widest variety of Play Modes and Multiplayer Options found in a football game.



Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
While Madden's AI may be really good, nothing substitutes for the chess game that ensues between two veteran human players. Coming through in pressure situations, making big plays and doing awesome jukes is what multiplayer Madden is all about. And don't forget the art of taunting and talking smack during the game.

How We Like To Play:
A few weeks ago, we had a Madden tournament where we drafted our own teams then battled it out. It was great fun, and led to a lot of broken joypads and bruised egos. Also, playing two teams of two players is interesting because it really changes the way the game is played. The biggest challenge is getting both players on the team on the same page when it comes to playcalling. It gets so serious that sometimes you make signals to your teammate when you're calling a play so he knows what you're running.

Biggest Upsets In Our Madden Tournament:
Upsets happen, and as they say, "That's why they play the games." John Ricciardi

SEGA SATURN

Broken Links

Hardware advances in multiplayer gaming haven't come easily. Sony created the inexpensive Link Cable, but third-party support for it waned. Companies thought it was too unrealistic to expect gamers to bring two television sets, PlayStations and copies of the same game in a room to play. For the most part, they are right. Too bad, because Link Cable games are a blast.

Sega took the most risky and ambitious route with the NetLink. The idea was sound, but unfortunately there simply weren't enough Saturns sold to boost sales of this Internet device. Although software support is decent, killer multiplayer games such as Quake don't support the troubled Link.

SEGA SATURN
SEGA SATURN

notched his first win against art monkey Mike Stassus in the critical elimination round. Editor in chief Joe Funk, favored early to make it to the finals, bowed out in the first round due to a cheap call.

Party Games

There are multiplayer games, and then there are party games. Of course, party games are multiplayer games, but they generally consist of games that are easy to play. This insures that no one is left out of the action. For example, you might not want to play Twisted: The Game Show with your college buddies, but such a game might go down better in a party-like atmosphere. Here's some other party faves:

Jeopardy! (N64)
Monopoly (PlayStation)
PaRappa the Rapper (PlayStation)
Twisted: The Game Show (3DO)
Wheel of Fortune (N64)

SONY
PlayStation
PlayStation
SEGA SATURN
EGM 100
SEGA

4. NBA Live 98

(PlayStation)

The Game:
This is the best PlayStation basketball game, by far. Live combines realistic hoops with intuitive control and fun gameplay.
Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
However good Live is, the computer opponent is just too easy to beat to a pulp (even on the hardest difficulty setting). Thus, to get some good competition, you really need to turn to humanoid help.

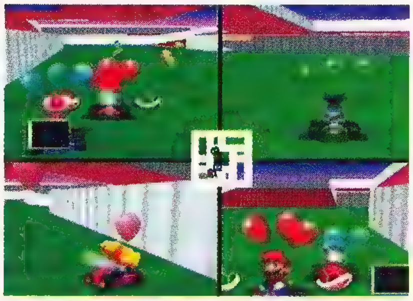
Auto Replay

How We Like To Play:
Playing two teams of about three people each works really well. If it goes any higher, offenses get a little too unorganized and illegal. Finding six people to play isn't too hard a task, because rookies tend to learn the basics of Live quite quickly. If things get hairy, just turn down the fouls and realism. We're actually just starting to gear up for our NBA Live tournament, which will probably happen after the holidays. If you want to make a really in-depth tournament, you can undergo the time-consuming task of putting together teams with all-time great players (with the player creation feature). Then, you can save them to a memory card and use these custom players in a tournament.
Overlooked Part Of This Game:
The 3-Point Shootout taken from the NBA All-Star game is a really good but underrated part of Live 98. It's also easy for casual gamers to pick up and be competitive at.

3. Mario Kart 64

(Nintendo 64)

The Game:
Take a few of the most popular Mario characters, throw them in a bunch of souped-up go-karts and you have a totally unrealistic, yet awesome racing game.
Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
There's nothing like playing Mario Kart 64 with four players at a time (well, OK, Diddy Kong Racing is *something* like it, but we prefer Mario Kart 64 for multiplayer games). Racing is fun and frantic; very few games out there let you shrink, shoot or squish your friends on the race track. You can also forego the racing factor and simply battle it out with three friends, head-to-head-to-head-to-head. Last kart standing wins.
How We Like To Play:
Cheap with no-holds-barred. No *EGM* editor feels an ounce of guilt releasing the lightning bolt at the perfect moment to screw up another racer's well-timed jump. Did that cheap little nudge knock you off a cliff? Heh...tough luck, sonny. You can also be really crafty and hang around second or third place until the last lap. This way, you can get the better power-up and speed past the leaders who get the crappy green shells because they're in first.



Why Mario Kart 64 Beat Diddy Kong Racing:
It was a close call, but Diddy Kong Racing wins in the one-player department, and Mario Kart 64 wins in the multiplayer department (some even like the Super NES Mario Kart more). Why? Kart 64 is simply more exciting. The levels and power-ups were designed to keep races close and hectic (see above strategy). Everyone is always close to the action, and almost always, it's anybody's game.

SEGA SATURN

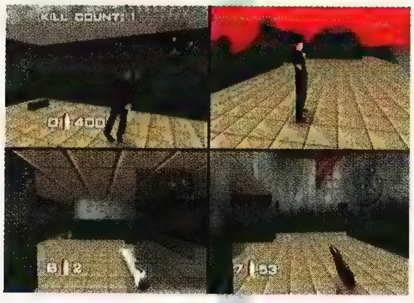
2. GoldenEye 007

(Nintendo 64)

The Game:
As you've probably heard, this 3-D first-person game is one of the few that does its movie license justice.

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
GoldenEye is the first and best four-player Doom-type game on a console system, period. The multiplayer competition in this game is as groundbreaking as it is intense. Endless hours of fun can be had with all of the different modes, some of which are unlocked by progressing through the game's One-player Mode. There's nothing better than filling your favorite Bond movie character up with lead—especially that short guy named "Oddjob."

How We Like To Play:
There are a few modes we prefer, although we love 'em all. Try playing two-on-two teams with the Golden Gun. That's about as intense as it gets. One shot, and you're dead. And it feels oh-so-good to get those one-shot kills. It's also amusing to see everyone running around the level like mad trying to find Golden Guns so that they have a fighting chance. If you're wondering about which weapons to use, keep in mind that Rocket Launchers and Grenade Launchers are nice, but using Power Weapons and Automatics is more entertaining because it lends itself to long gun battles.



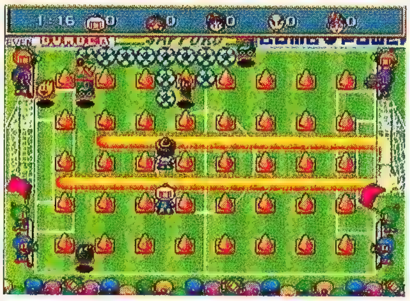
Most Embarrassing Way To Die:
If you're killed by the weak little Klobb gun (named after Nintendo Guru Ken Lobb) in multiplayer competition, that's reason to be ashamed. And whoever kills someone with a Klobb should probably get two points instead of one.

1. Saturn Bomberman

(Saturn)

The Game:
One of the grandfathers of multiplayer gaming, the latest in the series adds subtle improvements to a proven game.

Why You Shouldn't Play It Alone:
Bomberman has never been known as a one-player game (although the N64 version tries its darndest to be one). If you bought Bomberman for solo action, you bought it for the wrong reason.



How We Like To Play:
Naturally, getting as many players as possible into a game is a good idea. There's plenty of room in the Hi-res Mode on the Saturn to allow 10 players to play at once. Unfortunately, the 10-player level is a very plain one (nothing but bricks), and we play on the more interesting, smaller levels. The soccer level is one of our favorites—how can you beat fire coming out of soccer goal nets? That's something special, indeed.

Dumbest Way To Lose Momentum:
Sega held a Bomberman competition a few months ago in the *EGM* offices. The participants in the finals match were Kraig and Shawn. Kraig was up 2-1 in a best of five. Game Three started, and oddly enough, one of the Bombermen died immediately. Apparently Kraig wasn't paying attention and didn't notice that his starting spot on the map changed, and it resulted in bombing himself out of game four in less than five seconds. Shawn took advantage of this embarrassing mistake and won game five to become the office's new Bomberman champion. Let that be a lesson to all you Bomberman players out there. Learn from Kraig's mistake—pay attention to your starting position.

SONY
PlayStation
SELECT
START

Nintendo
SEGA SATURN

TEEN
T
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
PlayStation

ONE MAN. ONE SOLUTION. ONE STATE OF MIND.
TM
ASC GAMES
http://www.ascgame
Co-Developed by
VISUAL CONCEPTS
TM

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Review Crew

Our Philosophy

For the third month in a row, we've reached our all-time high for reviews. (The big 33!) Here's how it's done: Each reviewer gives a game an overall score, which is displayed behind the review and based on how the game compares to other titles for the same system. In addition, the reviewers rate each game's graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of these scores are listed at the bottom.

Editors' Choice

Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.

Games that average at least an 8.0 receive Silver Awards.

Rating Scale

10-Perfection An absolutely flawless experience. It doesn't get any better

9-Virtually Flawless Drop what you're doing and buy this nearly perfect game

8-Semradical Delivers everything you'd want in a game, despite minor flaws

7-Worthy A solid title that you won't regret buying

6-Good, Not Great Sure, it has its problems, but it's still fun to play

5-Average Not great, not crap. A ho-hum title that isn't for everybody

4-Rent First We have problems here. Definitely try before you buy

3-Time Waster Playing it for more than 10 minutes gives you a migraine

2-Don't Even Rent The only point in playing this garbage is to make fun of it

1-Flush It Run for your life if you see it, or use it as a coaster

Guest Reviewer

Joe Fielder

VGS Features Ed.

Joe used to work with the rest of us in the boonies outside of Chicago, but ZD moved him to San Francisco last year to act as features editor to our online video game arm, VideoGameSpot (http:www.videogamespot.com). His gaming interests include import titles (why hasn't any U.S. company signed on to publish Grand Theft Auto and Gamera 2000, he asks) and collecting old console systems (a good chunk of the ones that were shown in our recent Timeline piece belong to him). He comes out to the offices every now and again to discuss the site, and is the strange talking box in all our meetings.

Current Favorites

GoldenEye 007
Armored Core
Critical Depth
Frogger

Favorite Genre: Shooting

Shawn Smith

Shawn finds it hard to believe that February is already here. Last thing he remembers is Christmas—lots of gifts to wrap and a bit too much eggnog at one of his Christmas parties. Since he's a little confused, Shawn figures that it'd be best to just snuggle up by a toasty fireplace, grab a controller and play some games. Sounds nice.

Current Favorites

Quake
One
Sonic R
Tekken 3

Favorite Genres: Action/Adventure

Dan Hsu

Shoe missed a day of deadline so he could fly out to New York to make his TV debut. MTV invited him to appear on *MTV Live*, to speak as an expert on the video game industry. We were pretty flattered since we were the only magazine asked to go. Imagine our surprise when Shoe showed up on TV for an entire *minute*. Well Shoe, 14 more to go...

Current Favorites

X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Last Bronx
Sonic R
Burgertime

Favorite Genres: Strategy/Puzzle

Crispin Boyer

Chicagoland's arctic weather had Cris—who grew up in Florida—looking for gaming-related ways to keep warm. He tried heating his seat with the Naki laser sight, but the beam wasn't powerful enough. Then he wrapped himself in overheating PlayStations, but all those skipping games drove him crazy. In the end, he just put his pants back on.

Current Favorites

Alundra
Legend of Zelda 64
Monster Rancher
Quake

Favorite Genres: RPGs/Action

Kraig Kujawa

Feeling good after taking home the trophy for the office's Madden NFL 98 tournament by defeating former Team EGM comrade Dean Hager, Kraig is now ready to hang up the uniform and retire victorious from this year's game. He'll probably move on to basketball, or whatever new sports tournament we happen to cook up.

Current Favorites

Colony Wars
Armored Core
NBA Live 98
Madden NFL 98 (Retired)

Favorite Genres: Sports/Strategy

John Ricciardi

John's about to head back to his hometown (New York) for a nice two-week break. After all the mania that was Space World '97, and the subsequent bashing he received in X-Men vs. SF when he returned (although NOT by Shoe, mind you), he figured it was time for a break. So what's he gonna do on his big vacation? Play more games, of course!

Current Favorites

X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Legend of Zelda 64
Yoshi's Story
Alundra

Favorite Genres: RPGs/Adventure

Kelly Rickards

Now that *EGM*'s Jamaican editor has gotten Quake II out of his system, he's once again content with console games. Yoshi's Story has struck his fancy lately, and the general consensus is that the cute dino should keep him happy until Zelda 64 and Metal Gear Solid arrive. When asked if the wait is worth it, all he could say was, "Yeah mon."

Current Favorites

Legend of Zelda 64
SF Collection
X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Yoshi's Story

Favorite Genres: Racing/Fighting

Sushi-X

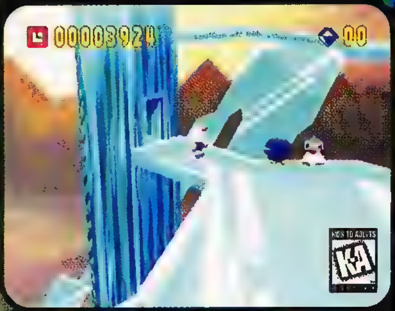
Sushi's got the love bug, and we're all wondering who the mystery girl is. At least, it seems that way. All we know is that he's floating around the office with a glossy look in his eyes while humming a particularly sappy tune. That ear-to-ear grin can only mean: a) Sushi's been struck by Cupid's arrow, or b) he's gotten an inside look at Zelda 64...

Current Favorites

Legend of Zelda 64
Tekken 3
SF Collection
Tomb Raider 2

Favorite Genres: Fighting/RPGs

BOMBERMAN 64



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Hudson
Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-4
Best Feature: One-player Mode
Worst Feature: Multiplayer Mode
www.nintendo.com

I have mixed feelings about Bomberman 64. I like it, but I think I do for the wrong reasons. **I mean, the One-player Mode is better than the Multiplayer Modes!** This can't be right...can it? It's a weird situation. As a regular old one-player game, it's a lot of fun with plenty to offer. The graphics are simple, but still pretty nice (especially those reflections on water), and the music is great. One of the main things about the game that really rubs me the wrong way is the awkward camera positioning. Sure, the camera is fully adjustable, but even with that, certain tight areas make it impossible to get a really good angle on what you're doing—or more important, who's about to hit you or if you're about to fall to your death. Since the game is one of action *and* exploration, I think it's important to have a nice view of where you're exploring. OK, now on to what B-man is known for—namely, multiplayer fun. As a Bomberman game (that is, as a multiplayer game), Bomberman 64 isn't all that great. Playing against AI opponents is barely fun at all, and the 3-D arenas make playing against your friends more of a hassle than it's worth. I understand that the entire game is 3-D and they couldn't make the Battle Mode 2-D, but as it stands, the Multiplayer Mode needs a lot of work. Overall, it's a solid 1P game, but those camera angles need some work. **Shawn**

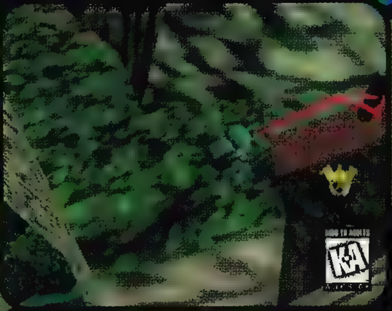
Bomberman 64 represents a pretty drastic change to my favorite multiplayer series. Even though **it plays almost nothing like previous Bomberman games**, the One-player Mode is still a lot of fun and offers a nice change of pace from the tried-and-true 2-D mayhem of the old days. Finding all the hidden Gold Cards is a nice added challenge, and the reward is well worth it. My main gripe is that the Battle Mode gets old too fast. **Crispin**

Bomberman 64 looks exactly like how I'd picture Bomberman in 3-D. But **in my book, certain games should stay 2-D**, and the B-man series is no exception. The one-player game is fairly decent. A third dimension gives the developers much more room to be creative here. Unfortunately, it doesn't work for the multiplayer game. The 2-D games are much more exciting and frantic. The game could also use some more multiplayer maps. **Dan**

This marks the most drastic change in the Bomberman series, and I'm not just talking about the 3-D graphics. The One-player Mode is much better than previous B-man games, thanks in part to more in-depth gameplay and new elements. I don't like the faster-paced Multiplayer Mode quite as much as the previous ones, but it is different, intense and fun to play. **It's good to see this new take on the Bomberman series done right.** **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	7

CHAMELEON TWIST



Publisher: Sunsoft
Developer: Japan System Supply
Featured In: *EGM* #102

Number Of Players: 1-4
Best Feature: Unique Gameplay
Worst Feature: Weak Camera Angles
titan.co.jp/jss

Chameleon Twist is one of those games that shows off how creative this new generation of programmers can fare but also how limiting their techniques are. What we have here is an utterly useless story line combined with an intriguing weapon: your tongue. Go figure. The various uses for your secret weapon are not only bizarre but limited at the same time. You'll quickly find yourself more than a little bored, if your skill level is akin to beating Super Mario World. Obviously, Chameleon Twist is aimed at beginners, and with that in mind, I can see the appeal of the overly cute graphics and sickeningly sweet background tunes. Now if only they could fix the **terrible camera angles**, we'd have a real contender for a top spot in Top 10. Plus, it could have used more power-ups to add variety to the game. Basically, you won't see much different in the game beyond the techniques you have from the start. There is no way to improve your character throughout the game, and that lack of advancement hurts a little. Maybe if I learned several new tongue attacks, I'd be more motivated to continue on to the next level. Not even the Multiplayer Mode is very exciting, and in fact, I don't consider it worth mentioning. Chameleon Twist is clearly meant for one-player use, and the Multiplayer Mode was added without much thought. **Sushi**

Well, this ain't exactly Mario 64, but then it's not supposed to be. Chameleon Twist's gameplay emphasizes puzzle solving over exploration, with lots of little tricky areas that require specific tongue-flicking moves. And the game is fun—while it lasts. The brief, easy levels are proof enough that **this game was designed for kids**. That's not to say grown-up players won't enjoy it, at least for the few hours it takes to beat the game. **Crispin**

Chameleon Twist is a good example of how average a 3-D action/adventure game can be. It has the standard cute characters, death-defying platform jumps and array of moves. But here's the problem: **Unlike Mario 64, this game doesn't really present anything new.** Sure, the way you kill enemies is interesting but certainly isn't revolutionary. Besides all of this, the graphics are a bit below-average and the control needs to be tweaked. **Shawn**

Chameleon Twist is an entertaining 3-D platformer that suffers from one minor (well, major) problem: **It's too short.** There are only six stages, and you only need to go through four of them to get to the final Boss. I managed to go through all six stages (and the special seventh area) in about six hours, which says little for this game's replayability. But still, what IS there is good, and the Battle Mode is amusing. Definitely give it a try. **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	5

MK MYTH.: SUB-ZERO

MATURE
M
AGES 17+

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway
Featured In: *N/A*

Number Of Players: 1-2
Best Feature: Decent Story Line
Worst Feature: No Cut Scene Movies
www.midway.com

Following in the footsteps of its PlayStation twin, MK Mythologies: Sub-Zero is probably the last attempt of this type of genre mixing for a while. Don't look for MK Mythologies: Raiden anytime soon. While I somewhat enjoyed the PlayStation version, I detested the N64 mockery. The **cool cut scenes are completely missing**, replaced by static screens that look like Super NES rejects. I can't imagine how this game got approved by Nintendo for publishing. It has nothing that made the PlayStation version work for me. The sound and music aren't nearly as crisp and moving on the N64. Overall, this translation feels like a rush-job. This is truly a shame too, since otherwise, it is a veritable carbon copy of last month's reviewed title. The scene transitions seem slightly cleaner, thanks to no load time, but that isn't enough to save MK Myth from a fatality of the most gruesome kind. The quest remains true to the Mortal Kombat world, with many of the attacks we all know and love. For some reason, my uppercuts seem to miss 50 percent of the time, despite passing through what should be a solid hit. It seems that collision detection isn't done very well either. Well, that's enough ranting for now I suppose. MK Mythologies is no more than an average rental title, and not even the wrath of Shao Khan could change my mind. **Sushi**

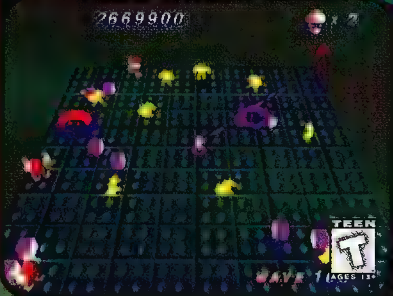
MK Mythologies has the coolest premise (playing through a side-scrolling action title with a fighting game character), but **the execution just doesn't fly at all**. The stage graphics can be nice sometimes, but the gameplay is very repetitive (there's not nearly enough variety in the enemies), and the control is terrible. The story is kinda cool, and the (severely hacked) cinemas are neat, but that's about all MKM has to offer. Better luck next time. **John**

I understand what Midway was trying to do with MK Mythologies, but the results are anything but stellar. First, the game is more difficult than it had to be simply because you have to hit a button to flip your character. That to me is not very intuitive. The character animation is very stiff and awkward and the graphics are only average for a 2-D action game. Granted I'm not a fan of MK, but **you can find better action games on the N64.** **Kelly**

Besides some nicer-looking graphics and textures, MK Mythologies on the N64 is essentially the same as the PlayStation version. One of the things I miss is the FMV sequences (even though they are cheesy). **The control is still the worst part of the game**—why hit a button to turn around even if it's to maintain a certain style? I think the idea is excellent but it sure wasn't executed right. I'm sure it can be done, but not with this one. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	5

ROBOTRON 64



Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Developer: Player One
Featured In: *EGM* #96

Number Of Players: 1-2
Best Feature: Intense Gameplay
Worst Feature: No 2P Simultaneous Mode
www.cravegames.com

Let me get this straight—Midway decided to release War Gods, but PASS on this? Hello? Robotron 64 is one of the most addictive games to come along in quite some time. After being canned by Midway, Crave picked up the game and here it is, back from the dead. Was this a wise move? You bet it was. Robotron 64's action-packed gameplay will strongly appeal to fans of twitch shooters and old-school style arcade games (especially those who liked Smash TV), and the variety of control setups (particularly the ability to use two N64 controllers at once) is a welcome addition to the game. The graphics are nothing to write home about, but they're hardly what I'd call bad. The music, on the other hand, is really good—it's almost all fast-paced techno and it really gets your adrenaline pumping for the frenzied gameplay. Still, what's the best part about Robotron 64? The amount of pure game it offers. **There are 200 stages total!** By the time I reached 100, I was sure it couldn't possibly get any crazier, but sure enough it kept going—and going—all the way to 200. And much to my surprise, I thoroughly enjoyed it the whole way through (before I played it, I figured it wouldn't be too hot since Midway passed on it...silly me). The only glaring flaw? No two-player simultaneous play. That bites. Other than that though, R64 rocks. **John**

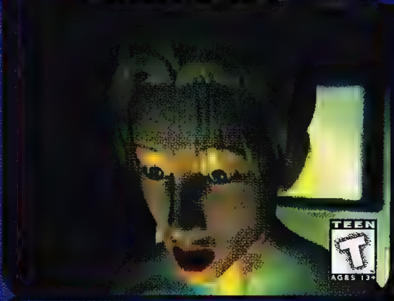
Finally, a good update of Robotron! This version fixes all of the problems that plagued the PS version. R64 is fast, frantic and sure as hell hard to put down. This is the type of game you'll come back to time and time again. **It has all the addictive qualities that made the original so successful**, plus a few nice extras, like Bosses, bonus stages and power-ups. It's a little too easy though, and $50-60 may be too much to pay for such a simplistic game. **Dan**

I like the N64 version of this game more than the PlayStation one. The primary reason is the nonexistent load time, which helps the game keep up its signature frantic pace. There is, however, slowdown during later levels. I realize there are many enemies on screen, but the N64 has enough muscle to cope. This fault aside, **just about everything possible has been done to update this classic.** If you like Robotron, you'll like this remake too. **Kraig**

Recently, we were graced with a few translations of this arcade classic. Now on the Nintendo 64, we see one last attempt at reviving a game that seems better left to fond memories. While the action is quick and furious, even the most beginner player should be able to advance without much trouble. **I enjoy the original game more than this souped-up version.** The lack of the original full-screen overhead view saddens me. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	7

ENEMY ZERO



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Warp
Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1
Best Feature: Tons O' Suspense
Worst Feature: Slow-Paced Game
www.sega.com

Enemy Zero is one of those games that (generally speaking) doesn't do well. Games like Myst, Mansion of Hidden Souls and D may have a cult following, but they certainly don't make it into the mainstream console market. Luckily, it has been awhile since a game like Eo has been out, and besides that, the game is incredible. With that said, I hope the game does well. The intro sequence—and really all the video in the game—is spectacular. It creates a great, cinematic mood. **The story line and how it unfolds is much like an actual movie.** Sure, the whole "trapped in a ship with an alien" plot has been overdone, but it's still cool. One thing about the big-screen feel is that everything is really dramatic—sometimes too dramatic. For example, at one point Laura (the main character) opens her locker to find an item she needs. The whole time this overly suspenseful music is playing. I mean, come on—she's opening her locker for crying out loud! Also, I'm generally not too hot on the "hex-by-hex" style of movement, but it works in Eo. I also like the areas where you can roam freely (kind of like Doom). The way you encounter enemies is cool, too (only being able to hear them). Overall, expect lots of suspense over action, but I think it's sometimes nice to play something different. Enemy Zero is definitely that...in a good way. **Shawn**

8.0

This is one of the few games that I was really excited about...and it didn't disappoint. **Eo is an almost perfect blend of horror, sci-fi and adventure.** The graphics are incredible as are the music and sound effects. The extremely slow-paced nature of the game will turn off many potential fans, but the few intense (and frightening) scenes will keep you going. If you are a very patient gamer, check it out. Eo is unlike anything you've seen before. **Dan**

8.5

You know, I really wanted to give Enemy Zero a higher grade than this. **It's an excellent game that can really scare the crap out of you** if you play it alone at night in a dark room. The game just screams atmosphere, and the story (which is obviously influenced by the movie *Alien*) is really intriguing. My main gripes are that 1) Once you beat it, it becomes shelf fodder, and 2) The control is a little too sluggish, which can be frustrating. D fans will love it. **John**

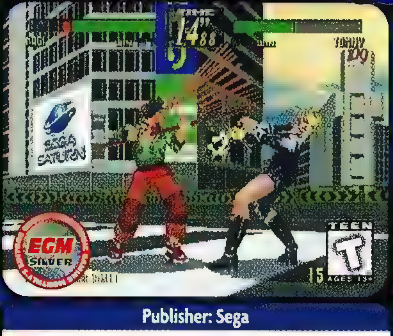
7.5

I had a hard time getting into Enemy Zero. I don't think Eo is a bad game by any means; **it's just way too slow-paced for my tastes**. Eo is a cerebral game and one that places a high priority on building suspense and creating horror. I'm a fan of games that force you to think but everything happens at a snail's pace which desensitized me to the parts that should've scared me silly. Even the "action" sequences seem barren of action. **Kelly**

6.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	8	3

LAST BRONX



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Featured In: *EGM* #98

Number Of Players: 1-2
Best Feature: Tons of Moves
Worst Feature: Not Enough Characters
www.sega.com

Last Bronx is perhaps my favorite of the Sega three-button fighters. It's the type of fighting game a patient gamer (who's willing to learn all the intricacies and nuances of the deep fighting engine) will truly appreciate, and the type a casual gamer would probably be bored with fairly quickly. Each character has dozens of unique moves, combos and juggles—plenty more than any 2-D sprite-based fighting game. It also has more personality than the average fighter. The character backgrounds and game intro and outro fit well together, giving the game a decent story line. But it's the (mostly) blunt weapons that set this game apart from the rest. Sure you can get swords and sabres in other fighters, but **it's very satisfying to bash your opponents in with tonfas and mallets**. What I don't like is the amount of damage simple combos can do. I play Yusaku, and a simple two-hit juggle can do almost 50 percent damage, if it properly connects. Add in a jump-in ground attack, and you're halfway to victory. Cheap. Other annoyances include minor slowdown and polygon breakup. The worst, however, is the lack of fighters. The eight selectable characters Last Bronx offers are great, but after playing a game like Fighters MegaMix, I've come to expect more. LB had the potential to be fantastic; it simply needed more fighters and better balanced gameplay. **Dan**

8.0

I'm impressed. I didn't expect much from Last Bronx (never played the arcade version), but it turns out the fighting style (with weapons) is much more satisfying to me than Fighting Vipers ever was. **The depth of play and variety of moves is fantastic**, and the various modes of play (especially Aerial Combo Practice) make for great replayability. More characters would've been nice, but otherwise I have very few complaints about this one. **John**

8.5

I don't like fighting games with tap-tap controls but **there is a lot to like about LB.** First of all, the characters seem to be well balanced (a rarity in today's 3-D fighters) and the weapon-to-weapon action is very cool with tons of great-looking moves. Everything runs at 60 frames per second so the character animation is smooth as silk and the controls are very responsive. Some of the moves are hard to pull off, but otherwise I like this game. **Kelly**

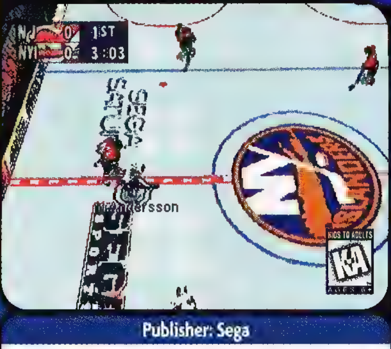
7.0

Another Saturn game comes through and impresses me! This is the kind of fighter I like. You don't HAVE to be a fighting game genius to do well. For example, I played Shoe and beat him pretty badly even though he thought he was good. The easy combos and painful-looking moves make you seem like a master! The simple control scheme ends up offering a lot more moves than I thought possible. **LB is easily my favorite Saturn fighter.** **Shawn**

9.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	8

NHL ALL-STAR HOCKEY '98



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Radical

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-6

Best Feature: Lots Of Options And Strategies

Worst Feature: Sluggish Gameplay

www.sega.com

Last year, Virgin's NHL Powerplay '96 was widely considered to be the best all-around Saturn hockey game. Sega's NHL All-Star Hockey '98 is the unofficial sequel to Powerplay '96, with the same developer (Radical), the same basic game engine and the same slick interface. Compared to the last All-Star Hockey, this game is light-years above and beyond it in just about every category. But compared to last year's Powerplay, ASH '98 falls short in several areas where it should've improved. First of all, more important than any other problem, the game plays WAY too slowly. Everything moves along so sluggishly it almost seems like the game is running in some sort of slow motion. The animation of the players is nice, and the overall graphics aren't bad at all—but when they're moving like they're in quicksand, it really takes a lot of fun out of the game. Another problem (which isn't quite as bad, but still noticeable, especially to veteran hockey gamers) is that the goalie AI isn't too hot. What this adds up to is a game that has loads of potential, but falls short in the most important areas. To its credit, the player AI is very good, and the sound effects are nice, but still—with all the features and options in the world, **a hockey game without speed and excitement just isn't hockey**, and that's what kills it for me with All-Star '98. **John**

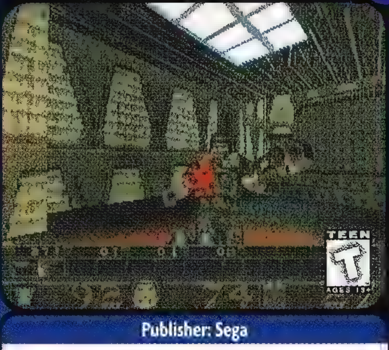
It plays like hockey and looks like hockey, but NHL All-Star is missing some of the game's key elements. **Hockey is a very fast-paced sport, but this game is woefully sluggish.** Even worse, the sound is very boring and bland, further taking away what little excitement might have seeped into the game. It's too bad really. This is a sound, fundamental hockey game, but it just lacks the atmosphere and speed that make this sport exciting. **Kraig**

I don't understand how anyone could even *dare* put out a sorry game like this. It plays as though the players are skating on molasses, not ice. The game moves so painstakingly slow, and at such a poor frame rate, that I was tempted to break out my Genesis to fulfill my hockey needs. The slapshots feel weak, the one-timers are slow, and the graphics are lackluster (especially the flat, texture-mapped bench of players!). Stay away. **Dan**

All-Star Hockey is a decent-looking game on the Saturn, but this title has a few problems in the gameplay department. **The main problem here is speed, or in this case, the lack thereof.** Hockey is a fast sport, but you wouldn't think so when playing All-Star '98. If the play was faster this game would've gotten a higher score but the slowness really affects things. The player AI is actually pretty good but the goalie AI needs more work. **Kelly**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	3	6

QUAKE



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Lobotomy

Featured In: *EGM* #99

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: 3-D Graphics

Worst Feature: No Multiplayer Support

www.sega.com

Quake for the Saturn is a remarkable re-creation of the computer game, even in spite of its flaws. The game moves at a reasonable frame rate and Quake's 3-D graphics and gloomy mood are intact—for the most part. The enemies' animation is occasionally choppy, and sometimes they blend in too well with the backgrounds when they are far away. Some improvements help make up for its deficiencies, such as new light sourcing on firing weapons and explosions not in the original. There are two major problems with this game that severely mar the excellent game engine. The first is the lack of multiplayer support. **Quake is not a great one-player game**—it gained its notoriety on the Net as a multiplayer. The Saturn version of Quake doesn't even have NetLink support, which is criminal, given Quake's Internet roots. Also, the control is difficult to manage, even when using the analog controller. Without being able to look around quickly (done with a mouse on the PC), it is hard to pick off enemies above or below you (very essential). They did the best they could, but the grim reality is that current console controllers just don't work well with Quake. It's too bad that this game doesn't have multiplayer support. Without that and solid control, this great-looking Saturn version of Quake isn't nearly as good as the original. **Kraig**

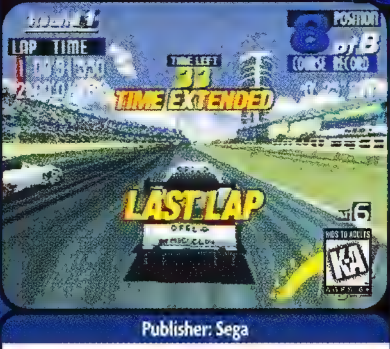
Powerslave and now Quake prove the guys at Lobotomy really know their stuff when it comes to first-person games. Their Saturn port of Id's Quake is amazing, with lighting effects that make it **more impressive than the non-accelerated PC version**. Everything's intact—including the lethal level design and Nine Inch Nails jams. Too bad there's no Deathmatch Mode, which would have launched the game's replay value through the roof. **Crispin**

I've long awaited this game, mainly for its multiplayer aspects on the PC versions. Unfortunately, that's the one feature Quake doesn't have on the Saturn, and that cripples it for me. I hate the texture maps, but love the realistic lighting effects that go beyond anything the Saturn has ever done. I also find the weapon choices and sound less exciting than in all other titles of this overcrowded genre. **Without multiplayer, I'd pass.** **Sushi**

Quake may be one of the best-looking and best-sounding first-person shooters on the Saturn. At the same time, it's also one of the dullest. Compared to a game like Duke, Quake has drab level designs and boring weapons. You can keep playing and keep playing, and **you'll find nothing innovative with this game**. This makes me wonder why Sega skipped making Quake Net Linkable—it certainly would've made this a better buy. **Dan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	4	6

SEGA TOURING CAR



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Sega

Featured In: *EGM* #100

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Realistic Driving Physics

Worst Feature: Twitchy Control

www.sega.com

In the arcade, Sega Touring Car has a reputation as one of toughest racing games ever. Now although it's much easier to shave those precious milliseconds off your time when you don't have to pay a buck per play, the Saturn version is still one of the more challenging racing games in recent memory. If ever there was a driving game of millimeters, STC is it. Unless you hit every turn just right and accelerate just so, moving on to the next track is just a pipe dream. Because the margin of error is so small on each track and the demands are so great, **only the utmost intensity and concentration will cut the mustard**. I feel as though I need a pep talk and some cheerleaders whenever I play this game. As a two-player game, my spirits lifted as I discovered that I didn't suck at games; everybody struggles with this one at first. Part of the problem is that STC plays much better with the analog controller than the standard six-button pad. The other problem is that the hyper-sensitive control is difficult to come to grips with and the last problem is that Sega designed this game to be tough as nails. The developers went to great pains to insure this game accurately simulates the driving physics of the European Touring Car racers. They succeeded with that but somebody forgot about the gamers. This game is too hardcore even for me and that's scary. **Kelly**

This arcade port may not be much to look at (the textures are blocky and bland), but it's got it where it counts. Control in STC is pretty good—especially if you have Sega's 3D Pad—but you'll do a lot of slidin' around until you get used to it. And **the Two-player Mode is just as fast as single player.** I do wish it packed more than three circuits, but there are secret tracks and events tied to the time in your Saturn's internal clock. **Crispin**

Was there anyone *not* excited about this game? Think about it: The home Daytona was decent, Rally was leagues better, so Touring Car should've been awesome, right? Not really. It certainly looks nice and is one of the fastest home racing games around. The shoddy control, however, makes you forget all of that. Don't bother playing this without an analog pad. The home game also needs many more tracks, direct translation or not. **Dan**

Touring Car may not be as good of a home port as Sega Rally was, but it sure comes close. The sensation of speed is amazing (although the frame rate certainly suffers in exchange), and the control (particularly with the Analog Pad) is sweet. **I like the whole aggressive nature of the game** (awesome fast-paced music, super-fast gameplay, etc.), and overall it's just a fun game to play. A great rebound after the painfully weak Daytona CCE. **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	8	5	7

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

NAUGHTY DOG

UNIVERSAL

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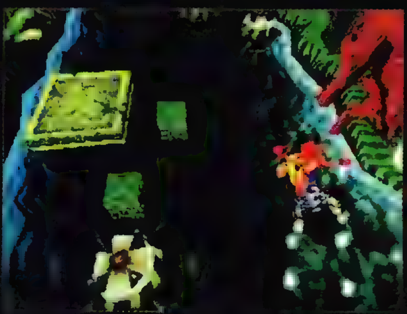
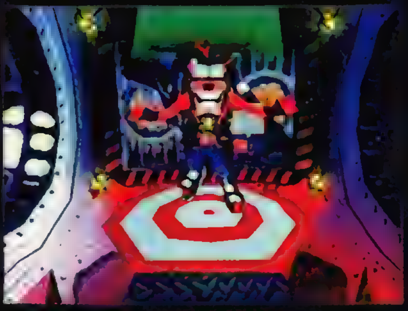


Crash is back. And he's all pumped-up and ready to rumble.

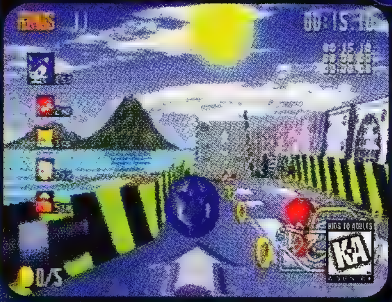


This time, Crash will have to work his way through huge, all new 3-D environments. He'll fly with a jetpack, surf on a jetboard and saddle up a polar bear cub. He's got new moves, he'll meet new characters and he'll face plenty of dangerous new obstacles. It won't take long to realize: Only the strong survive.

CRASH 2

PlayStation

SONIC R



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Travelers Tales

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Cool 3-D Graphics

Worst Feature: Not Enough Tracks

www.sega.com

If you're a Saturn owner and you fancy a fun, addicting racing game with furry characters, Sonic R is your game. If you just want to race through the game (so to speak), you can beat it fairly quickly but you won't see all there is to see. Although there are only four main courses (and a couple of additional hidden ones), **this game is a blast to play**. There are tons of secret paths and items in the game (some of which open up additional characters and courses), so it'll take a while for players to see everything. Each character has his/her own strengths and special abilities too, which offer incentive to try different tracks with different racers. Graphically, this is one of the best-looking Saturn games I've seen in a while. The 3-D texture-mapped graphics are absolutely lush in their detail, and the frame rate always seems to hover around 30 frames per second. In addition, I really think the track designs are excellent. Not only is there a lack of the famous clipping problem that all too often rears its ugly head on the Saturn, but the twists and turns and off-track sojourns mix things up nicely. The music is a little too nondescript for my tastes, and I do wish more tracks were included. In the end though, Sonic R is more than the tepid diversion I expected it to be. The game grew on me and if you give it a chance, it'll probably grow on you. **Kelly**

8.0

There's no question about it—if a Sonic racing game had to be done, this is the way to do it. Right from the start, I got that old Sonic feeling (chaotic levels, lots of colors and a weird bunch of animals). **The graphics are some of the best on the Saturn**, and as cheesy as the tunes are, you can't help but hum them again and again. The way they hide the pop-up is really nice, too (well, except in the Two-player Mode). Also, there's lots of secrets. **Shawn**

8.0

Sonic R is one of those types of games that drive you absolutely nuts because it's so damn good, but it just doesn't give you enough of what you want. **This is a brilliant racing game** with fantastic graphics and some of the most well-designed tracks ever (complete with secrets, shortcuts and multiple paths). The five levels have enough to keep you coming back, but after beating them, I only wanted more. Great game, but it needs more tracks. **Dan**

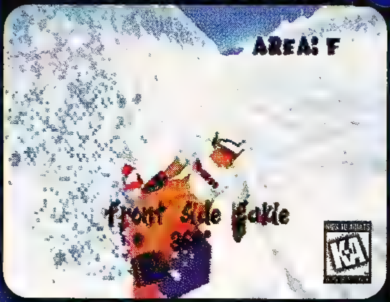
8.0

When you first play Sonic R, you'll probably be turned off by the awkward control of the racers (**I actually prefer the digital pad in this one**). Once you get used to it, you'll find a real solid game. The track designs are excellent, and there's plenty to do on each course besides just coming in first. The Two-player Mode isn't all that exciting, and the music is pretty weak (though strangely catchy), but otherwise Sonic R is definitely good. **John**

7.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	6	7	7

STEEP SLOPE SLIDERS



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Cave

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Course Design

Worst Feature: Blocky Textures

www.sega.com

Steep Slope Sliders may be a stupid name, but the game itself is the best snowboarding sim on the consoles. **Simply put, it's a lot of fun**. The four main courses are well-designed and full of rocks, bumps, ramps and other obstacles that launch you skyward for flips, spins, board grabs and dozens of other cool tricks. You also get a half-pipe course, a more conventional Alpine track with slalom gates and a ramp- and rail-filled snowboarding park where you can really cut loose with the tricks (yes, the game's setup is very similar to Sony's Cool Boarders 2, complete with hidden alien character). Better still, once you open the four secret boarders—including a punk kid and a speedy racer who can't perform any tricks—you can earn access to four secret tracks. And then you can open even more characters! It all makes for high replay value. The game controls fine, even though it doesn't support analog. You need to use the A, B and C buttons with the shoulder buttons to pull off advanced tricks. These moves aren't easy, but that's why they're worth the big points. You also get a complex replay system that lets you watch your best tricks over and over (using slow motion, colored lenses, strobe lights and other camera effects, if you like). Steep Slope Sliders' graphics are a bit rough around the edges, but they're plenty fast. **Crispin**

8.5

Steep Slope Sliders is a great snowboarding game. The graphics are OK (the textures are a little bland and there are some clipping problems at times), but other than that, **SSS is a very solid game** (with a silly name). In addition to the original seven courses you can choose from, there are four hidden courses and tons of hidden characters. If you're a Saturn owner looking for a snowboarding game with staying power, this is the one to get. **Kelly**

7.0

This one is a major surprise. I didn't know what to expect since I've seen so little on the game. The graphics could be better, but that really doesn't matter one bit because the game is so damned fun! On top of this, the control is almost flawless (only failing when you get stuck in a corner). **This one is easily in my top 10 favorite Saturn titles of all time.** I'd even go as far as saying Steep Slope Sliders is a tad better than Cool Boarders 2. **Shawn**

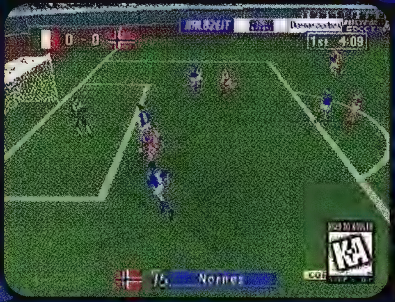
8.5

Here's a game that I can sink my teeth into right from the start. Learning the mechanics is very easy, even if the advanced techniques are tough. **The physics of this fast racer rivals Cool Boarders**, and you'll find that so do many of the features. Still, there are some great tunes and awesome courses to complete, so you'll not lose interest for quite a while. My only complaint is that the graphics aren't as smooth as I'd have liked them to be. **Sushi**

7.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	8

WORLDWIDE SOCCER '98



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Sega

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Graphics

Worst Feature: Blatantly Wrong Play-By-Play

www.sega.com

Cobi Jones said, "This is the best soccer game on the planet." **Cobi Jones' licensing bonus check must've made him blind.** Worldwide '98 is one of the biggest disappointments of the year for me. I was a huge fan of last year's version. The problem is, soccer games in general have improved, and Worldwide didn't. First off, the multiplayer aspect is seriously lacking (for example, only certain modes can be played with friends). When you start the match, you're treated to an impressive view of the stadium and a loud crowd waving their home countries' flags in support of their respective teams. But once the game begins, the disappointment kicks in. Human-controlled players are identified by little, hard-to-see numbers, not by large, colorful circles. The real trouble, however, starts when play stops. With every corner kick, free kick, goal kick and throw-in, everything stops. You cannot move around the players on the field to set anything up. You simply must deal with the setup the CPU gives you. Another major annoyance is the completely off-sync play-by-play. The announcers get plays and teams wrong almost all the time. Sometimes, they'll even scream out, "GOAL!" for no real reason. This is a very average soccer game by today's standards. It has a few nice features (realistic passing, on the fly coaching), but it has too many faults. **Dan**

5.5

WWS '98 is definitely an above-average soccer game, but it's hardly perfect. The addition of Club teams is nice, and the engine seems to have been polished up a little bit, but otherwise **this is pretty much the same game as last year** with some annoying faults. The fact that you can't move around whenever the opposing team is about to put the ball in play really annoys me, and the AI isn't as good as it should be. Overall I'm disappointed. **John**

5.5

This year's WW Soccer took a step forward graphically, while its gameplay took a step backward. **The game looks better, but isn't as exciting as it used to be**, especially because of the horrendous goalie intelligence. Balls kicked from across the field would find their way into the net in addition to easy routine plays, making the gameplay frustrating. The One-player Modes are still fun, but don't save this game from being disappointing. **Kraig**

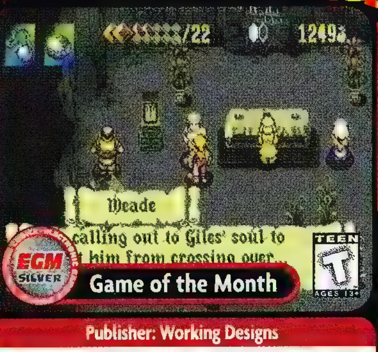
7.0

What happened here? The first two versions of Worldwide Soccer were totally rockin' and now...this! **This game has the worst graphics and the slowest gameplay of the series.** The computer AI seems to be a carryover of last year's version (at best) and the game is a bit on the sluggish side. Played as a multiplayer game, WWS '98 has its merits (as do nearly all multiplayer games, I should add) but it's not enough to save this sinking ship. **Kelly**

4.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	4	4	7

ALUNDRA



Publisher: Working Designs

Developer: SCE/Matrix

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Challenging Dungeons

Worst Feature: The Game Didn't Come Out Sooner

www.workingdesigns.com

I've been anxiously awaiting this one for a long time, and now that I've finally got my hands on it, I can confirm what I believed would be the case for quite a while. **Simply put, Alundra rules.** Action/RPG is a genre that, for some reason, has dropped off the face of the planet (sorry, Legacy of Kain isn't my definition of an RPG in any sense of the word unless you mean Really Poor Game), and WD's bringing it back with Alundra just makes my day. Alundra is like a mix of Zelda and LandStalker (that's practically holy), but with enough original elements and atmosphere to completely stand on its own. The story is involving, though not incredibly deep (although it does pick up later in the quest), and the characters develop nicely throughout. The translation is WD's best yet, and hopefully all of their future titles will follow Alundra's lead (read: subtle amounts of humor, but not so much that it ruins the mood of the game). Anyway—the most important thing about Alundra? The game is (gasp!) difficult. In an age where challenge seems to have been placed second to technology, Alundra comes on strong as one of the more difficult games around. It took me well over 40 hours to beat (though I do like to take my time), and I promise—the puzzles WILL stump you at one point or another. Great, great game. **John**

9.0

Working Designs' first PlayStation RPG brings welcome diversity to the system's role-playing lineup. Alundra is the first action/RPG on the PS, and fans of LandStalker and Zelda will love it. **It's the puzzles that make the game so rewarding.** They're tough, sure, and many are downright brilliant in design. Working Designs, as always, did an excellent job translating the dialogue and story, although their trademark humor is toned down a bit. **Crispin**

9.0

I was a big fan of LandStalker, and although Alundra doesn't share LS's isometric view, it does have similarities. Although the overhead view and realtime battles are very Zelda-ish, the style of the puzzles, character art (with the big oversized boots and head) and even some of the music tracks bring me back to LandStalker. Alundra's action is challenging and well-paced and **the lengthy quest will take a good chunk out of your gaming life.** **Kelly**

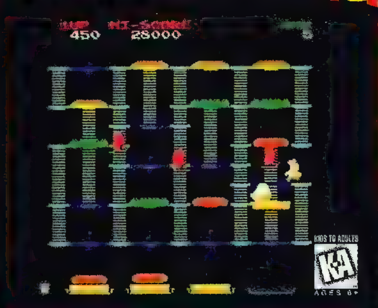
9.0

Well, it's about time! I've been waiting for a good Zelda-ish adventure for the PlayStation, and now I have my wish. Sure, there are a few awkward areas, and the color palette isn't very impressive in many places (I get real tired of bland greens and tans, see Quake), but overall, the quest in Alundra is very solid. This is a game that will be **very comfortable in many gamers' hands**, even if it isn't quite as hyped as Final Fantasy VII. **Sushi**

8.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	6

AGH: MIDWAY COLLECTION 2



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Digital Eclipse

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Brings Back Memories

Worst Feature: Why No Astrod?

www.midway.com

I'm all for compilation discs that feature classic arcade games (even classic home games), but **whether or not this one is worth owning is entirely up to the tastes of each individual player**. The seven games on AGH: The Midway Collection 2 are certainly classics by nature, but I found that after playing most of them again, some don't live up to the fond memories that I have, while others are turning out to be even more enjoyable than I remembered them to be. For example, I loved Spy Hunter on the NES and in the arcade, but for whatever reason, I just can't stay interested in it now, even in all its "arcade perfect" glory. On the other hand, I was never a big fan of Root Beer Tapper (maybe because the original Tapper was mostly located in bars, and being 8 years old at the time, I had more pressing things to worry about than getting into bars—like trying to convince my parents to buy me Voltron), but after playing it now, I've come to really enjoy the game. Overall, BurgerTime is easily my favorite game on the disc (I can still play it for hours without getting tired of it, even with the questionable control), and the Trivia game is a nice extra, even if it does become pointless once you play through the whole thing once. In the end, what it all comes down to is whether or not you're a fan of the games on the CD. If you are, buy this. **John**

7.0

Somehow, this arcade collection is both exciting and disappointing. Three of my favorite arcade games are now mine—Moon Patrol, BurgerTime and Root Beer Tapper (how about a code to play the original Tapper?)—but the remaining titles leave little to be desired. These collection discs are becoming **the new graveyard of games** that should have stayed buried in obscurity. Thank goodness the trivia section is well-done with cool info! **Sushi**

7.0

I'm always a proponent of buying classic game compilations. After all, it's the best way to build a library of some of the greatest games of all time. Spy Hunter was a little disappointing (it just doesn't do it for me anymore), and the rest are fairly mediocre...except for BurgerTime. This is the REAL reason to buy this compilation (even though it controls better on my old Intellivision). **If you already have BurgerTime, you may want to pass.** **Dan**

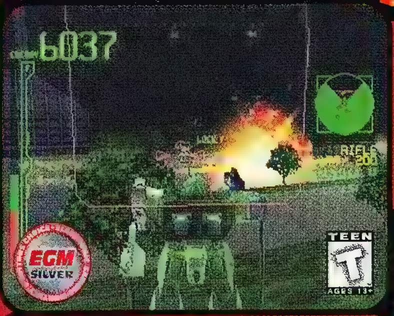
7.0

Inevitably, whether you'll want this compilation depends on whether you like the classics on it. Personally, **I learned that Spy Hunter is not as fun as I remembered it to be**, and that the only games that I still enjoyed playing were BurgerTime and Joust 2. Otherwise, the presentation of this pack could have been better and more refined (although the trivia game offered up some interesting tidbits and interviews). Overall, this is a good value. **Kraig**

7.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	4	3	8

ARMORED CORE



Publisher: SCEA

Developer: From Software

Featured In: *EGM* #99

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Customizing Your Mech

Worst Feature: Small Environments

www.playstation.com

Ever since I was a kid, I loved those television shows, such as *Transformers*, *Voltron* and *Robotech*, that were chock-full of fightin' robots. Armored Core is a game that puts you behind the wheel of those monstrosities in what amounts to **a very deep and well-designed game**. Like many other mech games, you play the role of a mercenary-for-hire whose only allegiance is to himself—and money. Credits are earned by completing contracts whose objectives include destroying other robots, killing monster ants and protecting bases. Adding complexity to the game is that you must pay for the ammunition spent and damage incurred during battle. This makes you carefully conserve your firepower, and try to avoid being hit, even if you've got an overpowering mech. Once you save enough money from missions, you can upgrade just about anything on your mech, enabling you to kill faster (to earn more money, to kill even faster, etc.). The best thing about Armored Core is the incredible amount of customizations you can do to your mech by buying parts in the shop. New arms, legs, heads, in addition to an assortment of weapons can be bought to tailor your mech. As the missions get harder, you may find yourself having to adapt the way you play in addition to refitting your mech. Top to bottom, this is a great game. **Kraig**

8.5

Armored Core may be the best mech game to date. It takes Virtual On's classic formula and pushes it one step further by giving you missions and the ability to buy parts for, and customize, your mech. Giant robot combat is simply that much more fun if you're earning money (from completing missions) and buying more powerful gear. The game could've been that much better had it supported dual-analog control (for "authentic" mech control!). **Dan**

8.0

To me, Armored Core is the happy median between the too simple Virtual On and too complex titles like MechWarrior II and Carnage Heart. It takes arcade-style gameplay and deepens it with strategic elements, as you attempt mission after mission, configuring your mech with different parts and weapons. Its final stage is about as challenging as you can get without crossing the line over into frustrating. **This is not one to miss.** **Joe**

8.5

At first I wanted to call this one a Virtual On rip-off but that couldn't have been further from the truth. Sure, the game may have mechs in it but there's a lot more. For one, **Armored Core isn't set in a dinky arena.** I really like the variety of environments and number of missions the game gives you. Second, the game also allows you to build a custom mech and then use it in the game. I mean, what's cooler than that? I'm sold. **Shawn**

8.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	7

The real wheel
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ALPERTRONICS
MACHINE EDGE
COMMANDER
JUSTIN TIRES
TIRE TECH
21
76
PlayStation

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You want perfect replication of the high-speed driving experience. We got it.
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AUTO DESTRUCT

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: EA-U.K.

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Balanced Learning Curve

Worst Feature: Repetitive Music

www.ea.com

At first, I didn't know what to expect from Auto Destruct. On the surface, the game seems more like a rip-off of Twisted Metal than anything else, but after spending more time with Auto Destruct, I found this game has more substance than TW in certain ways (keep in mind that I'm not a big fan of the Twisted Metal series). For one, the learning curve and pacing of the missions seems very well tuned to my tastes. **Although action is the rule of the day, there are some aspects of resource management** in AD, and whatever you need always seems to be close at hand. This "just-in-time" resource availability works well in the game. For example, I always had myself to blame for a failed mission instead of the game...a good sign. All the action takes place in San Francisco, and even though the game environment is absolutely huge (several square miles), the radar is useful enough for you to find what you're looking for. If anything, the city is a bit too big as it takes what seems like forever to traverse it. Graphically, Auto Destruct is only about average. The texture quality is OK and the explosions are decent, but overall, the graphics are nothing to write home about. The music also gets on your nerves after a while as the tunes are repetitive. If you're into mission-based racers, Auto Destruct is a decent choice. **Kelly**

Imagine AD as a Twisted Metal/Felony 11-79 mix with much more depth and a much larger playing area. Although the missions are pretty much the same, they are all delivered with enough window dressings to keep things interesting and fresh. If you're a fan of offensive driving, and felt something was always missing from the other games of the genre (i.e., the two aforementioned titles), give AD a try. **It might just have what you're looking for.** **Dan**

Auto Destruct doesn't do a whole lot for me. The graphics are nice and the missions do the job, but I can't get into the game. AD makes it fun to drive around and hit things, find things or protect things, but **sooner or later you get bored—you'll want more.** The missions allow you to do different things, with a whole array of weaponry, but all it boils down to is just driving around. Overall, it's made well but doesn't last long. **Shawn**

This is a very ambitious game that re-creates large cities for you to cruise in your supercar. For the most part, the cities are well-constructed, although there is some visible 3-D pop-up. The gameplay is good, but some of the longer missions will try your patience. This is especially true if you've almost completed one, then die. You must then redo the entire mission. Overall, I recommend AD. It's a great game—only if you're a patient player. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLA
7	6	7	7

BROKEN SWORD

Publisher: T*HQ

Developer: Revolution Software

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Incredible Story Line

Worst Feature: Constant Load Times

www.thq.com

Prior to playing Broken Sword I never even heard of the Knights of Templar. Now that I've played the game, I want to know more! And that's what's cool about the game. **You can't help but get drawn into the complex and twisting plot**, the characters you meet up with and the bad guys you're after. Needless to say, the story line is excellent, but that's not the only thing that's cool about Broken Sword. The graphics are really nice—they totally look like something from a Don Bluth cartoon and are animated just as well, too. The backgrounds are also nicely drawn. One thing about the graphics that I notice is that at times some of the detail is lost, especially in the item bar and certain objects that you must interact with. On the flip side, the item bar itself and all of the Menu Screens in the game are really easy to use. Of course, what makes it user-friendly is the mouse. If you're into games like this, buy the PS mouse (especially for Broken Sword). On the dialogue end of things, the game has quite a unique cast, full of different voices. Don't expect all of the voice acting to be flawless—or at least all of the accents to be accurate (is that French or Russian?). Whatever the accent, there's plenty of humor that'll have you rollin'. The biggest flaw is the load time. Not that they're all that long, but there are A LOT of little ones that kind of "add up." **Shawn**

I can't say I've enjoyed a lot of point-and-click games, but this title is a nice exception. The animations are great, **the voice acting is fantastic** and it carries a quirky sense of humor. (I found myself asking characters lots of questions just to hear what they'd say.) Its iconic interface is also pretty good, though the pics could be a little larger or have text call-outs. If you liked the old text-based adventure games, here's a pretty worthy successor. **Joe**

I'm not a fan of point-and-click graphic adventures but **Broken Sword is intriguing enough that it kept my interest gene from flatlining.** The load times are annoying more often than not and the story is a bit on the linear side (there doesn't seem to be a way to do the wrong thing) but the dialogue is interesting enough for me to care about what happens to the characters. Like root canals, these types of games aren't as bad as I remembered. **Kelly**

Fans of long story lines will get a real kick out of this point-and-click adventure. The game starts quickly, and you become deeply immersed in the twisting plot right away. Don't expect such a simple ride as in many point & click games, since the game's true plot unfolds slowly. I think my favorite effect is the **beautifully integrated cut scenes** that blend seamlessly with the game to create a believable theatrical experience. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLA
8	8	7	5

FIFA: RTWC 98

Publisher: EA Sports

Developer: EA Canada

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Loads Of Features And Options

Worst Feature: Substandard Animation

www.easports.com

The FIFA series of games on the PlayStation has been disastrous, but this FIFA looks like it may signify a turnaround (albeit a slow one) for the series. That is not to say that this is a great game it's not. It is, however, a substantial improvement over last year's horrible FIFA 97. FIFA 98's 3-D graphics are the most detailed of any 32-Bit soccer game, but the problem is that the game's erratic frame rate and player animations leave much to be desired. Because of these problems, the control of the game isn't as smooth as it should be. Often, you are forced to take a few extra steps in the wrong direction because of choppy polygonal animations. Such a thing is annoying when those extra steps force you to kick the ball out of bounds or overrun a pass. Overall, the gameplay is pretty realistic, and includes all of the moves you expect to see in a soccer game. The passing has some problems, mostly due to passes not being led in front of their intended receivers. Also, the goalie intelligence is competent, but prone to some really dumb mistakes. **FIFA easily has the most features and licenses of any soccer game.** Player creation, hundreds of real teams and several modes of play are available, but does it matter if the gameplay isn't refined? EA should concentrate on improving FIFA's play so it can better complement its depth. **Kraig**

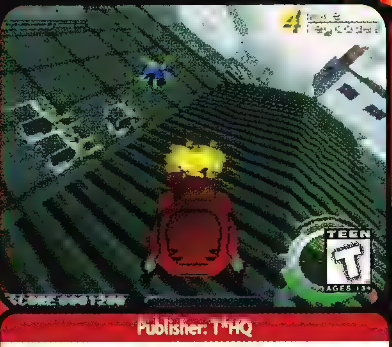
The two games may share the same name but the PlayStation version of Road To World Cup 98 doesn't quite have the magic that the N64 version provides. That said, **RTWC 98 is the best soccer game I've played on the PS so far.** The graphics have a clean look and the animation is very smooth. Although the Single-player Mode is fun to play, the multiplayer game is a blast and a half (as is to be expected with a soccer game). Not bad by any means. **Kelly**

RTWC 98 is a very, very good soccer game and one of the best available for the PlayStation, if not the best. It's a HUGE improvement over the last (forgettable) FIFA, and as usual with EA Sports games, it's loaded with options and has a fantastic interface. The game controls really nicely (Analog Pad support, yes!), and the animation is impressive too. My only complaint (again) is that it's just too easy. Scoring, stealing, whatever—**make it harder, EA!** **John**

The FIFA series continues to improve each year but still has trouble reaching the ever-elusive all-star status. This year's edition shows off improved graphics and more moves and commands than you can shake a stick at. The mediocre frame rate, however, sticks out like a sore thumb—it's very difficult to look past. The passing still isn't very realistic and the goalie acts a bit strange sometimes (making exaggerated dives for the silliest shots). **Dan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	6	8

GHOST IN THE SHELL



Publisher: T*HQ

Developer: SCEI

Featured In: *EGM* #99

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Interesting Levels

Worst Feature: Too Short

www.thq.com

I've never watched the Japanese anime of *Ghost in the Shell* before but if it's as cool as this game, I gotta watch it. I knew going in that Ghost in the Shell uses the Jumping Flash! engine but to my surprise this game is much more interesting and fun than JF 1 and 2 (and I really like both of those games). I really enjoy mission-based action games so this game is right up my alley. All of the missions are fairly diverse and challenging, but **the Bosses are way too easy**. It took me a while to get used to having the ability to stick to any surface like a spider but once I did, it became second nature. The really cool thing about that feature is that you can sort of adjust the difficulty of the game on the fly. When you take the high road and stick to the ceilings or walls the game is much easier, as you can just stay out of the range of fire and launch your (unlimited) missiles and pick off the enemy at will. On the other hand, if you're feeling frisky you could jump into the frying pan and duke it out right in the enemy's face. Difficult, but much more rewarding that way. The 3-D graphics are clean and the music seems to fit the mood of each mission quite well. On the anime side, I do feel that the FMV cartoons were kind of secondary and only vaguely followed the story line of the game...but they sure look good. Overall a very cool game but a little too short. **Kelly**

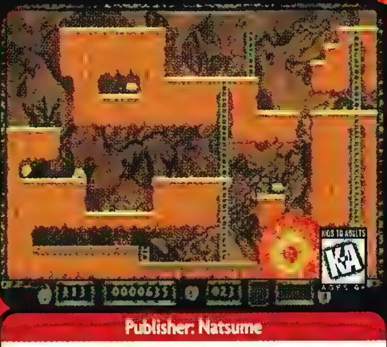
I must admit, this game isn't anything like I wanted to see for such a high-profile anime-based game. Still, Ghost in the Shell provides a pretty cool first-person shooter title that can hold its own against the myriad other titles in the genre. While I was looking for a detailed RPG/adventure, I'll settle for this game which displays cut-scene animation rivaling that of the best animes in the market. **Too bad the game doesn't uphold its namesake.** **Sushi**

GITS is a tough call for me. I love how the game looks and feels just like the movie in many respects, and the ability to climb walls (like a spider) adds an extra element to play that really distinguishes GITS from most corridor-style games. My problem? Aside from one or two very cool stages, **the gameplay is too repetitive.** With only three attack styles, and not much variety, things get old fast. If you're a fan of the movie, check it out. **John**

T*HQ's Ghost in the Shell is an action/shooting game that wonderfully bears little or no resemblance to Doom. How? With its fast pace, the ability to climb walls and a variety of missions (which get much more fun after the first three) and environments. You can be stalking an errant robot in a cityscape in one, then skimming along the ocean or speeding along a highway in the next. It's fun, but **if it had a few more stages, I'd recommend it more.** **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	6

LODE RUNNER



Publisher: Natsume

Developer: Presage Soft

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Lots O' Levels

Worst Feature: Some Levels Are Too Tough

N/A

You don't need to be a fan of the original Apple or Commodore 64 Lode Runner to get a kick out of this update. You only need to be a fan of tough puzzles. I'm talkin' *really* tough puzzles. Some of the later levels in this more than 50-stage game had me so stumped, I tossed my controller aside in frustration. Still, the thought of getting to that next puzzle did keep me coming back for another crack. You can save at any time, so you're not forced to backtrack through a lot of old stages if you screw up. While Lode Runner's two different collections of single-player levels kept me busy, **I actually had the most fun with the Two-player Mode**. It forces both players to invent strategies, such as having one person run interference to distract the pursuing monks, while the other collects all the gold. Just as in past Lode Runner games, this one lets you make your own levels, which can be saved to a memory card. It's a cool option, but constructing playable, well-balanced stages is tougher than you might think. I had more fun making levels out of lewd pictures. Lode Runner's simple graphics are far from spectacular (the character sprites are so small, they're downright adorable), but they are true to the classic. And it's the classic gameplay that's sure to draw a whole new generation of fans to this 15-year-old game. **Crispin**

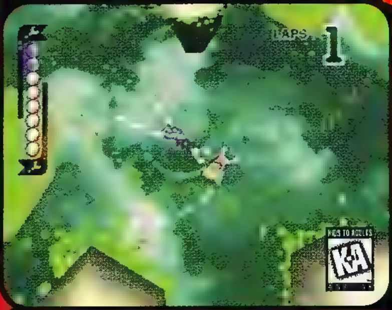
Lode Runner was one of my favorite games years ago, and I looked forward to this adaptation. As you might assume, it has improved graphics, sound and more levels, but nothing better than average. **The sad truth is that LR's gameplay no longer stands the test of time** as-is. With some additions, it could (and should) have been freshened up. For this reason, I think only hard-core fans will enjoy this game, as it has become too stale. **Kraig**

This brings back fond memories from my Commodore 64 days. It's pretty much the same game as it was years ago, which is a good thing. The Two-player Mode can even get amusing, as players try to help each other out, but end up screwing themselves in the process. **The AI is inconsistent**, freezing enemies for no apparent reason at times. Some of the levels were designed poorly, with dead ends and cheap traps aplenty. Solid, but a bit old. **Dan**

Here's a classic. This one actually came out on the PC a long time ago and has just now made it over to the next-gen consoles. I've always liked the simple concept behind Lode Runner, and this version stays true to that. The graphics may be tiny and the puzzles slightly repetitive, but it doesn't try to give you anything else. **It's a puzzle game and stays true to its roots.** Of course, I wouldn't pay $50 for it but at a lower price I'd consider it. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	6	7

MICRO MACHINES



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Codemasters

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Awesome Tracks

Worst Feature: Multiplayer Modes

www.midway.com

If you're a fan of the 16-Bit versions of Micro Machines, then I have good news—**the classic gameplay is nearly intact** in this spectacular 32-Bit update. For the uninitiated, the game has you racing Micro Machines (yes, those tiny toys) through oversized environments, such as the tops of dining-room tables, across school desks, etc. Depending on the play mode, you'll win by either beating opposing racers to the finish line, completing a track under a certain time limit or staying on a course longer than anyone else (trust me: It's too easy to get lost in some tracks, or fall off the tabletops to smash on the linoleum floor below). All of the coolest Micro Machines are represented, including monster trucks, tanks, power boats—more than 30 bug-size vehicles in all. Plus, you earn secret cars that are saved to your memory card and wagered in multiplayer races. Yet it's the tracks that are the real draw here. You'll see nearly 50 courses (although many are variations of others), and each is modeled in painstaking detail, from the dragonflies that buzz over the water stages to the sticky spilled syrup on the kitchen table. Still, as fun as single-player racing is, multiplayer stinks. Sure, it supports up to eight players, and there's plenty of modes. But with everyone confined to a single screen, it's way too easy to get lost. **Crispin**

The level design in this racing game is very cute, as are the graphics. Although there are different vehicles (including boats), and a few weapons, the gameplay becomes too repetitious. Even worse, **the multiplayer part of this game is atrocious.** The camera views make it unplayable, and the way that the multiplayer mode is designed to play is annoying. What you're left with is a very average racer that's only fun in its One-player Modes. **Kraig**

It's nice to play a game like this every now and again—clean and simple fun. The game starts off kind of slow but gets much better as you progress, and **the primitive graphics work surprisingly well.** Even though the courses tend to be a little short, I'm sure I'll still come back to this one. Two more things: What's up with the kindergarten training levels, and the lame characters you can choose? Overall, a solid little top-down racer. **Shawn**

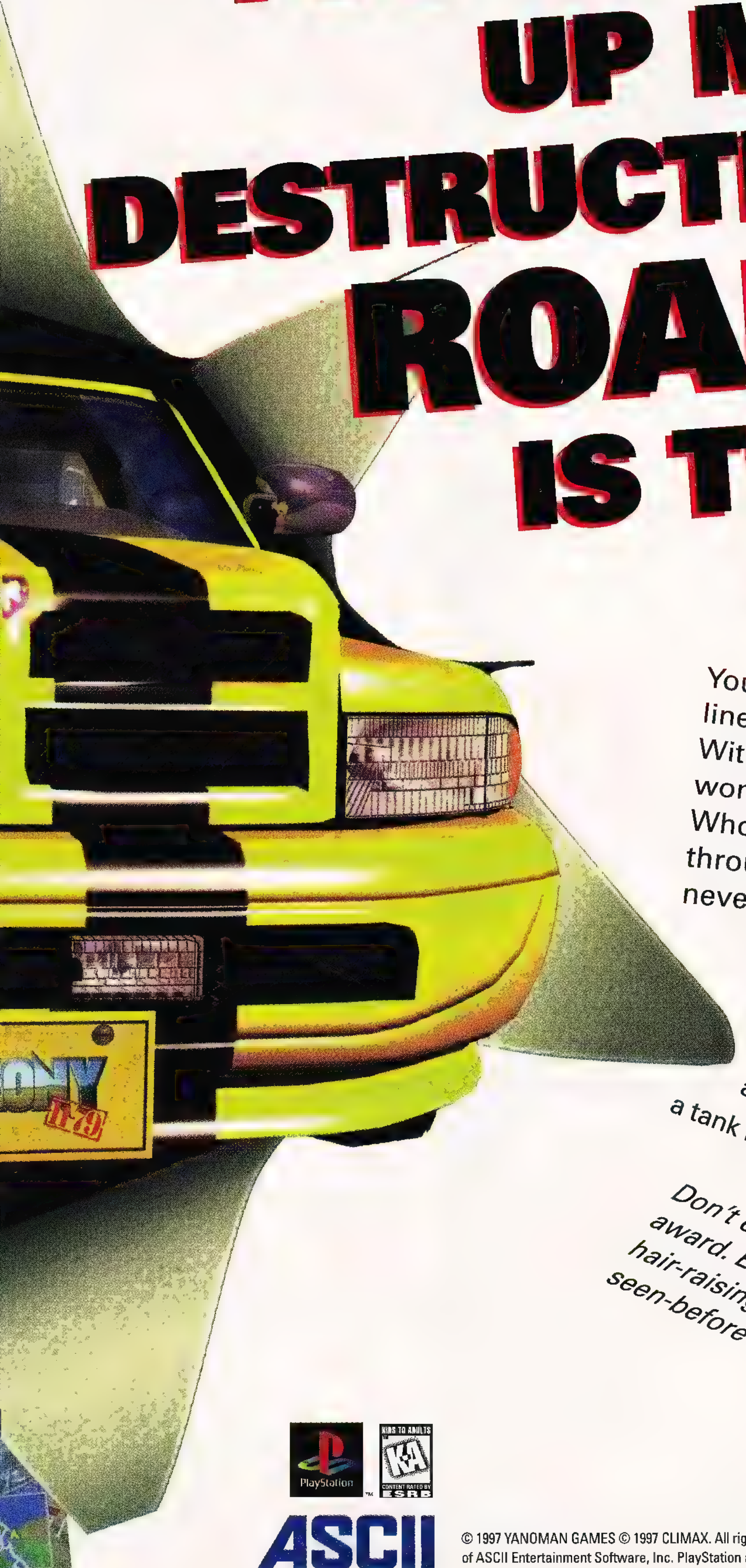
Players who enjoyed the first two 16-Bit Micro Machines titles will not want to miss this updated version, complete with so many modes you could get lost trying to find them all. While the one-player game is pretty good, **the Multiplayer Mode is an utter joke.** I don't call "falling off edges less than your opponent" a fun match. Yet this is all the game really is. The power-ups aren't very useful, and the track is too large for the screen. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	7

FELONY 11-79™

TOTAL TIME
02:01:46
TIME LIMIT
173
TOTAL AMOUNT
$138,200
TOTAL TIME
TIME LIMIT
274
TOTAL AMOUNT
$106,564
TIME LIMIT
272
TOTAL AMOUNT
$153,624
TOTAL TIME
TIME LIMIT
100 SEC
$165,000
TOTAL AMOUNT
$5,000
FENCE
FENCE
FENCE
TOTAL TIME
FLOWER
FLOWER
FLOWER
DAMAGE

YOU'RE SERVING UP MASSIVE DESTRUCTION AND ROADKILL IS THE MAIN COURSE.



You'll cross over more than a few double yellow lines in this driving game of mass destruction. With limited time to reach your objective, you won't be waiting for any lights to turn green. Whoops! You forgot to knock before pummeling through a neighbor's living room window. Tact never was your strong suit.

Your weapon is your wheels.

And, if you're good, real good, you'll get to drive up to 22 of 'em. Like a limo, a bad-ass pickup, a formula one racer, hell, even a tank if your hot-wiring skills are up to snuff.

Don't expect any citizen-of-the-month award. Expect spine-tingling action, hair-raising crashes and the never-seen-before track cam view.

PlayStation™

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

ASCII
ENTERTAINMENT

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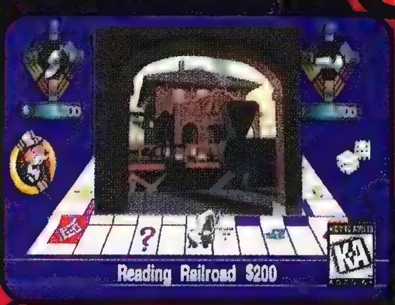
MONOPOLY



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive

Developer: Gremlin

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: All The Rule Variants Are In

Worst Feature: Why Bother? Just Play The Board Game

www.hasbro.com

Is Monopoly really that much fun anymore? Maybe, but I'm not convinced I need a multimedia, FMV-enhanced version, when I already own the more sociable, party-ready board game edition. That's not to say the video game is bad. In fact, any Monopoly aficionado will appreciate how comprehensive Gremlin made this game. It has just about every rule variation you've ever encountered growing up with the game, official and otherwise. Anyone can customize this game to their own preferences (hey, we all want to collect money on Free Parking, don't we?). A few little details could've made Monopoly better though. For example, I wish the CPU would tell you that you've landed on property that you already own. I also wish the Player Status Icons were bigger and easier to read. This useful tool lets you see at a glance what assets you own, but it could've been designed better (even the Railroads are not in their proper locations, between the correct colors). **Overall, this is a fine video game version of an already fine product**, but it's still the same old game I've played hundreds of times growing up. Give it a try if Monopoly is still fresh to you. Even if you're tired of the game, I would recommend checking out the neat features and cute FMV. But in the long run, this may not hold your attention like it once used to. **Dan**

7.0

This port of the PC hit game lost a few neat features in the translation, but it's still a decent game. The cut-scenes are cute, **they tire quickly after the hundredth showing**. I also wasn't very pleased with the clunky menu system that is obviously meant for a mouse. A word of advice to those of you who want to remain sane after a long Monopoly session: turn off the highly annoying, repetitious background music. **Sushi**

6.5

I've always liked Monopoly, even though it seems to take a lifetime to finish. I recommend picking it up, but only if you're going to play the game with friends—it's not all that fun with the AI players. **The graphics are good even though they're sprite-based**, and I'm glad there's an option to turn the in-game cinemas off (they're cool at first but get annoying). It may be a port of the PC version but for a console board game, it's done well. **Shawn**

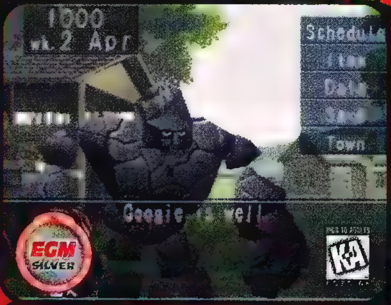
7.0

If there's a good way to re-create Monopoly on a console system, this is probably the way to do it. Monopoly is about having tons of weird house rules, deals and trades. This adaptation faithfully lives up to that tradition by providing a list of rules and options that can be turned on and off to customize the game. **Even the computer players will try to burn you with bad deals.** Not surprisingly, sometimes I'm dumb enough to take them. **Kraig**

7.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	8

MONSTER RANCHER



Publisher: Tecmo

Developer: Tecmo

Featured In: *EGM* #100

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Monster Variety

Worst Feature: Boring RPG Quests

www.tecmo.co.jp

This game was a surprise to me, in that I had quite a bit of fun experimenting with it. I figured it for yet another virtual pet wanna-be, but after creating a few monsters and testing them out, I had a blast. Not only did every CD I tried produce a unique monster, each one had different strengths and weaknesses, thus a completely different challenge each time. Add to that the ability to breed two monsters into a totally new monster, and you've got a recipe for virtual monster-making fun unparalleled anywhere else on the market. The battle sequences are fairly straightforward, where the more skills and training your monster has the easier the fight. Your battle options don't require much strategy, but you'll definitely have to maintain complete control of your monster because the auto-fight AI stinks. The options for training are excellent, with many stats to raise, and several tasks along the way to keep it interesting. Watch out, however, for **this is a time-waster**! You'll easily lose a few hours once you get going, and it'll take a few days to advance your first monster into high levels, let alone any others you try to create for breeding. Probably my worst experience was the lame RPG expedition sequences. These are obviously thrown in haphazardly, and really didn't need be in here. Monster Rancher is solid enough without 'em. **Sushi**

8.0

Tecmo's Monster Rancher is a title that can devour hours almost *imperceptibly*. A mix of a Tamagotchi and a Barcode Battler game, **it's probably an easy tie with Sony's PaRappa the Rapper for most original game of the year**. Ruin excavation and a rough story line help break up gameplay that's about 45 percent raising monsters and 45 percent setting them off to fight. It's fun and super addictive, but you'll wonder where the time has gone. **Joe**

7.5

Tecmo's Monster Rancher is one of the more unique titles to come along in some time. Being able to create your own monster from a CD is a totally cool concept that should be used more often. Once you get used to the specifics of breeding and raising your monster (which can be a little confusing at first), things get a lot simpler, and **before you know it, you'll be hooked**. If you're a fan of sims or RPGs (or better—both), check out MR. **John**

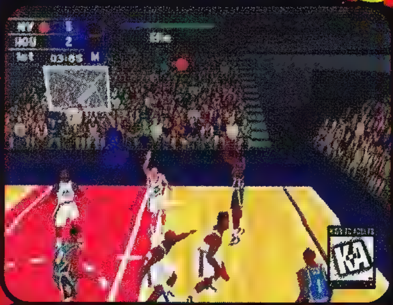
8.0

What a cool idea! I'm not into the "virtual life" thing, but if it's going to be done, this is the right way to do it. The whole idea behind the game is hilarious, too. **A world that revolves around people who raise monsters and then battle them?** You gotta' love that. The graphics and sound fit well, but it's the virtually limitless possibilities of monsters that wins me over. And as hideous as some of the beasts are, you can't help but love 'em! **Shawn**

8.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	9	8

NBA FASTBREAK '98



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Visual Concepts

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Player Animations

Worst Feature: Sluggish Gameplay

www.midway.com

In case you can't tell from the screen shot, this is the same game as Sega's NBA Action '98 (reviewed last issue). The differences between the two games are subtle. The PlayStation version is a little better thanks to its sharper graphics, but otherwise it's a carbon copy of NBA Action '98. **NBA Fastbreak '98 is a good and challenging basketball simulation, but it falls flat in a few key areas.** The 3-D player graphics are good, and the motion-captured moves (especially runners and post-ups) are some of the best and most flamboyant I've seen. Unfortunately, they move a little slowly and with some awkward physics, sometimes making the players appear like they "float" through their moves. This is particularly annoying because basketball is a fast-paced game by nature. The gameplay is good, aside from its occasional slow pace, but too many shots drain, especially from three-point land. Regardless, the atmosphere of the game is the most annoying facet. NBA basketball is usually exciting, but the fans' monotonous cheers show otherwise. Adding bad fuel to the fire is a very unconvincing announcer. Despite these problems, Fastbreak is a good basketball simulation. But frankly, there is superior competition on the PlayStation that will make NBA Fastbreak a good game that lives in the shadow of better ones. **Kraig**

7.5

Fastbreak is a good, solid hoops title. A few forgivable flaws, however, keep it from scoring higher. First, three-point shots seem way too easy to make. Second, long full-court passes are easy to perform. Third, the computer-controlled players act extremely stupid sometimes (like standing out of bounds while waiting for a pass). **This reduces Fastbreak to a more arcade-like experience**, rather than the sim that it tries to be. **Dan**

7.0

Midway's first "realistic" basketball outing turned out to be a bit better than I expected, but still nowhere near the current king of home basketball games (EA's NBA Live 98). NBA Fastbreak has nice graphics, solid control and decent sounds, but the gameplay is a little bit flawed (I'm sorry but Patrick Ewing does not go 4 for 5 from three-point land in a season, let alone one game), and **overall it's just not as fun as Live 98**. Still, a nice first effort. **John**

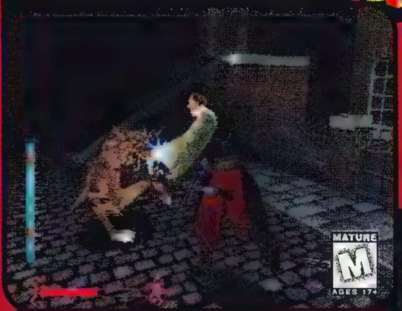
6.5

NBA Fastbreak is a decent first attempt at a basketball sim from Midway. There are a lot of things to like in this game. The 3-D polygonal graphics have a lot of detail and look great. The player animation is a little jerky but it's no big deal. My main gripe is that **the gameplay and controls seem a little sluggish** and the play-by-play announcing leaves a lot to be desired. NBA Fastbreak isn't quite up to the level of Live or Shoot Out just yet. **Kelly**

6.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	8

NIGHTMARE CREATURES



Publisher: Activision

Developer: Kalisto

Featured In: *EGM* #99

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: High Shock Value

Worst Feature: Hard-To-Use Items

www.activision.com

Utilizing a third-person engine that rivals Tomb Raider, Nightmare Creatures delivers **an awesome horror story** that you participate in. Much like Clock Tower, you'll soon find yourself slowly peeking around every corner looking for the boogieman. The special attacks are surprisingly easy to perform, and only the turning speeds get on my nerves. Otherwise, Nightmare Creatures is a well-done title that has lots to offer those who love to explore as well as beat the crud out of undead meanies. Nearly every technique is useful, except the lame jumpkicks. Don't even try them on most enemies, unless you enjoy being swatted from the air like a gnat. Also, this game is easily picked up by beginners as well as experts. You will not need to use the block button while you learn, but experts will quickly take advantage of it to complete their goals perfectly. Even the items are so powerful that it almost seems unfair to use them against the undead. Pistols kill with one hit and life capsules are everywhere. The only thing that keeps the items from ruining your game is that they are too hard to use without losing a limb or two to the zombie attacking. I suppose that balances the game somewhat, but I'd rather have it fixed. On a side note, Nadia is by far the coolest new character I've seen in a while, with devastating attacks and combos to boot. **Sushi**

8.0

I really like the feeling of a creepy atmosphere and ghoulish mood in Nightmare Creatures. Not only are the graphics lush and detailed, the look is very appropriate for this game. The levels are quite vast with tons of stuff to find and the other playable characters have lightning-quick response and lots of cool moves (especially Nadia). **Gamers looking for a true challenge will want to give this game a try** because it's very difficult. **Kelly**

7.5

The spooky atmosphere and scary monster-carving fun are clearly the best things this game has going for it. On the downside, the fighting engine gets old a few levels in (it really only amounts to button mashing or sticking to a few basic moves), the jumps are very frustrating, and having to continue fighting or die loses its charm quick. **All in all, NC is pretty disappointing**, but only because it seemed to have a lot more promise. **Joe**

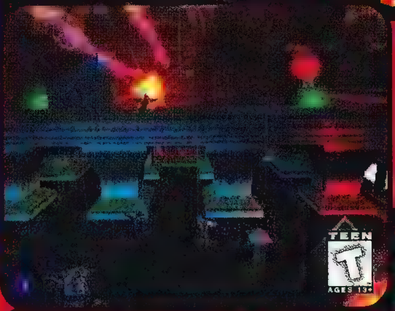
5.5

This game has creepy atmosphere to spare. Each of the 16 levels is a sprawling masterpiece of gothic real estate, with fog, fire and weather effects boosting the chill factor. The monsters look like something H.R. Giger and H.P. Lovecraft might whip up on their days off. Unfortunately, **it's the gameplay itself that's a little weak**. It's ridiculously difficult especially if you don't master the block button in a hurry. The control needs work, too. **Crispin**

5.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	5

ONE



Publisher: ASC Games

Developer: Visual Concepts

Featured In: *EGM* #97

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Awesome Visuals

Worst Feature: Tricky Control

www.ascgames.com

The E^3 sleeper hit and visually incredible One has finally arrived. So does it live up to its hype? Yes. **This is what a 3-D Contra should be.** It has huge explosions, lots of lights, a simple but effective story line and loads of action. And this action is apparent from the get-go—a short but impressive intro quickly gives way to an action-packed escape from a giant attack chopper along a narrow, elevated walkway! Yes, it is as cool as it sounds. The progression of levels is brilliant and reminds me of the old days of gaming. For example, you're fighting a Boss at the top of a tower—BAM, the next level starts on the top of that building. And where are load times? Virtually invisible. My major gripe is control. There were times when I expected to move one way but ended up going another because of a camera change (i.e., pressing left moves me forward—camera rotates—now left is actually down). This is a problem inherent in most 3-D games. Still, it can get annoying at times. Also, keep an eye out for camera changes that are a little too close or make it so you can't see the main character behind an object. Other than those, the game is solid. I mean, where else can you get this kind of intensity (in 3-D anyway)? There's not a really good 3-D Contra, and Apocalypse from Activision has yet to surface. Overall, one to check out. **Shawn**

8.5

This is one action-packed game that Visual Concepts really worked hard on making original. Although the execution falls short, the ideas behind them are brilliant. Almost every other level contains a new concept in 3-D gaming, making you want to keep playing to see what's next. **Technologically, however, this game is really sub-par.** The frame rate is way too choppy and the controls are way too sloppy for One to be completely enjoyable. **Dan**

7.5

This game is a graphic feast, but the gameplay suffers from some rough edges that make it artificially hard (and sometimes frustrating). The moving camera view often makes controlling your character tough, and even harder to aim at enemies. Sometimes huge explosions hide the obstacles you must jump, making your survival a guessing game. One is a good title, but it's very obvious that **it could have benefitted from more fine tuning.** **Kraig**

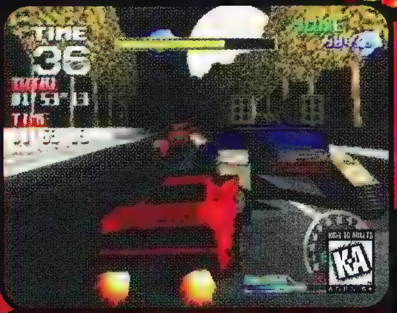
7.0

One is the game that will please some, yet disappoint many this year. I personally like the huge 3-D worlds to navigate, but **I detest the predictable patterns to the enemies, particularly the Bosses**. You won't have much challenge in your foes, but will find yourself constantly battling the crevices and bottomless pits. Deaths to these obstacles are so disheartening it ruins some of the fun for me. I'd rather die in battle than by falling. **Sushi**

7.0

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	8	6

RAY TRACERS



Publisher: T*HQ

Developer: Taito

Featured In: *EGM* #99

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Sheer Speed

Worst Feature: Not Enough To It

www.thq.com

I was excited when I first saw Ray Tracers. It looked like an updated version of Taito's awesome coin-op Chase HQ. Then **I beat the game in about 30 minutes, and I really have no urge to play it again**. There's just not enough to it. Each of the six levels has you barreling down the highway in an indestructible car, plowing through Sunday drivers for bonus points, then ramming a big Boss machine to death at level's end. Sounds exactly like Chase HQ, right? Trouble is, Ray Tracers doesn't pack any personality, making for boring gameplay. The courses are dull, the drone cars are no more than random nuisances (which yield bonus points when you hit 'em), and the six Bosses are easy to topple. You simply turbo boost into them until they die. Heck, two of the Bosses—a helicopter and a Harrier fighter—don't even make any sense. Why don't they just fly a few feet higher off the road, out of reach of your ramming attacks? On the plus side, Ray Tracers is very fast. The scenery blazes by. The four selectable cars control pretty well, too, although you'll encounter a few tight turns (the tracks aren't very challenging). You also get a Time Attack Mode that lets you race on four courses against a drone opponent, but it adds little to the replay value. Weapons, better tracks and tougher Bosses are what this game needs. **Crispin**

5.0

I like the blend of racing and destruction in Ray Tracers, but there are just too many problems with the game. The car's controls are overly sensitive, and there is abundant 3-D pop-up. Even if you can overlook these technical flaws, you can't ignore how easy this game is. There aren't many levels, and the Bosses are easily destroyed. **It won't take the average player more than an hour or so to finish the game**, making this rental material. **Kraig**

4.5

Do companies honestly think they can get away with releasing games that only take 20 minutes to complete? Where's the quality control? Ray Tracers is an excellent game—great graphics, great concept, fast animation, etc. But **20 minutes of video game enjoyment is hardly worth paying for**, right? Too bad. Ray Tracers could've scored very high in my book. I simply can't recommend this game wholeheartedly knowing how short it is. **Dan**

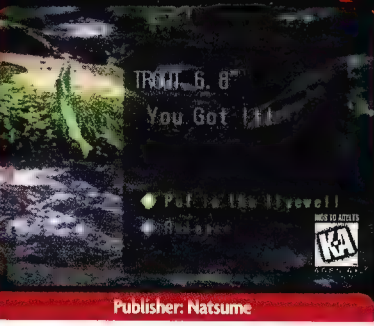
6.0

Talk about a straightforward game. The basic premise in Ray Tracers is this: Drive car, destroy obstacles, clear all checkpoints, kill Boss before timer runs out. That's it. Although the control is decent and the graphics are actually good, **Ray Tracers is the most simplistic, monotonous and boring racing game I've played in quite some time**. Since it's just a race against the clock, I found myself simply dodging obstacles to finish each level. **Kelly**

4.5

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	4

REEL FISHING



Publisher: Natsume

Developer: Pack in Video

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Great Sleep Aid

Worst Feature: Ridiculous Difficulty

N/A

Fishing games have historically been fairly popular for some unknown reason. I don't doubt that Reel Fishing will do well, but it won't be by my recommendation. I really couldn't stand to watch someone play this for the first time; my own experience was bad enough. On the easiest level, in the simplest fishing hole, you will find that catching a fish in Reel Fishing isn't anything like real life. You have a 95 percent chance of losing either the fish, the bait, the hook, or (most likely) all three. Sure, you might finally get the hang of it after building your virtual fishing skills for hours, but who wants to lose for that long? For one thing, you are guaranteed to hook a fish. These fish are dumb. Despite your high rate of hooking a fish, you will find that these bad boys can break your toughest line without much problem. This is mainly due to the lack of sensory feedback for the tension on the line. Without that, it's a pure guessing game. I love the other features like the fish tanks, but they honestly aren't what I'd buy a fishing game for. They are merely filler. Add the poorly designed tackle box interface to my list of frustrating features. **Carpal Tunnel Fishing is a better name for it,** as replacing your hook, line and sinker takes far too long thanks to the weak menu system and loading. At least the fishing hole backgrounds are cool... **Sushi**

Reel Fishing isn't exactly my kind of game, but I have to admit—for a "fish sim," **this is about as realistic as it's going to get.** There's a lot of strategy involved in choosing what equipment to use (hooks, bait, etc.), and being able to keep and take care of some of your catches in your own Fish Tanks is very cool. The music is very soothing and the whole game has a nice laid-back feel to it. I can't say I'm a fishing fan, but if you are—check this out. **John**

There's one nice thing about Reel Fishing—**it has confirmed that I am by no means a fisherman!** Seriously though, the graphics and feel of Reel Fishing are nice. I can't say my jaw drops or anything, but the game certainly does give me the feeling of really fishing. I would like to see more detailed graphics on the pole and interface screens. I wouldn't buy *any* fishing game, but if you're into fishing at all, then go for it—this one's a keeper! **Shawn**

I'm no expert, but the few times I've drowned a few worms with a rod and reel, **I've never had consistent bites like in this fishing game.** Just about every time you throw the lure in, you get a bite from a fish. As you can tell, this isn't a completely realistic game. Nevertheless, to my surprise, I did like it. There's a lot of quirky things about it, such as the option to keep fish you catch in an aquarium where you can watch and feed them. Weird, but cool. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	6

SHIPWRECKERS

Publisher: Psygnosis

Developer: Psygnosis

Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-5

Best Feature: Multiplayer Combat

Worst Feature: Annoying Music

www.psygnosis.com

Shipwreckers is a cute and original game whose simple play mechanics make it very appealing. Using an isometric view to navigate the cartoony 3-D terrain, your goal is to pilot a pirate ship through various waterways in the hopes of securing harbors and finding treasure. The gameplay is mostly action-oriented, but there are a few basic puzzle elements that involve the opening of doors and the use of transporters. A variety of weapons such as flamethrowers, depth charges, rockets and mines are available in addition to any pirate's weapon of choice—cannonballs. Although the One-player Mode is fun, **the two-player combat is clearly this game's strength.** Here, players square off in various water arenas with power-ups and ship upgrades available to them during battle. The game feels a lot like a fancy game of Combat, especially when the camera zooms way out when opponents distance themselves. Aesthetically, Shipwreckers isn't flashy, but its 3-D graphics fit the atmosphere of the game perfectly. The only annoyance is that the weapons and explosion effects are impressive, but they look out of place given the rest of the less flashy scenery. The music on the other hand is truly annoying, and I found myself playing with it turned off in order to keep my sanity. Overall, Shipwreckers proved to be a very seaworthy vessel. **Kraig**

Shipwreckers' mix of puzzles and high-seas shooting action just didn't do it for me. I got bored wandering around the levels, solving puzzles (most of which are easy), and getting blown to bits by the frustratingly tough enemies. Fortunately, **the game has a saving grace—its excellent Multiplayer Mode.** Up to five people can engage in ship-to-ship deathmatches in 10 different arenas. These multiboat bouts can get pretty wild! **Crispin**

Shipwreckers is another game that you shouldn't play alone. The Multiplayer Mode is a lot of fun with cool power-ups and claustrophobic arenas (that's a good thing), however **the single-player game is a little too boring and straightforward for my tastes.** Basically, you go around solving puzzles and shooting things; there just isn't that much to this game. The frame rate slows down at times and the music is a little too rinky-dink for me. **Kelly**

Overall, Shipwreckers is a fun little puzzle game with a touch of action. It's not the best around (compared to similar action/puzzle games like Lost Vikings) but it's certainly a lot of fun. The graphics look good and it has a cool multiplayer feature. **The biggest problem I have with the game is the music**—it's like those demos on old Casio keyboards. Luckily you can turn it off! If for nothing else, buy this one for the Multiplayer Mode. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	4	6	7

SPAWN

NEALS DINER
MATURE
M
AGES 17+

Publisher: SCEA

Developer: Sony Interactive Studios

Featured In: *EGM* #102

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Eerie Atmosphere

Worst Feature: Repetitive Gameplay

www.playstation.com

I remember going out to see this game in its very early stages, and getting excited. The idea behind the game was not only to convey what the Spawn world was like, but also to give PlayStation owners a fun gaming experience. I thought it shouldn't be that hard to make a *good* Spawn game considering the 16-Bit one that came out really didn't do the job. A lot of time passed and I couldn't help but think of how cool the game was going to be. **Well, it's finally here and I can't say that I'm impressed.** I'm a fan of Spawn (well a few of the comics and a lot of the figures anyway), and the game definitely has a certain horrific, gritty feel, but that's as far as it goes. Graphically, Spawn is a step below Tomb Raider. The special lighting effects and animated textures are impressive, but only go so far. I like the music—it being more for ambiance most of the time, and then rockin' when a fight sequence takes place. Which is another point. The exploration in the game is broken up by fight sequences that are below average at best. I understand that they weren't trying to make a fighting game here, but since this is the case, I would've left out the fighting altogether (or maybe make it more like Tomb Raider's action sequences). I really want to like this game, but its below-average gameplay prevents me from doing so. **Shawn**

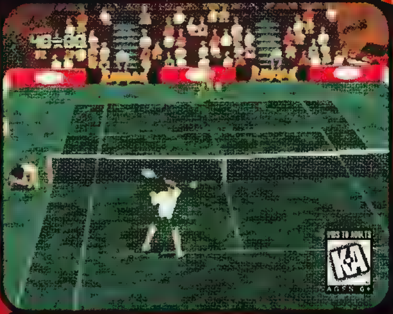
"Yawn" is more like it. **Spawn's a game not even a fan of the comic or film could like.** When it's not boring, it's frustrating. It fails miserably as both a fighting game and explorative actioneer, with a weak fighting engine, horrible 3-D camera, choppy control and bad graphics. It ranks right down there with Sirtech's Excalibur 2055 and ASC's Perfect Weapon. I've enjoyed nearly everything Sony's produced this year except this one. **Joe**

Looking for a bad action game? Smell no further than Spawn. The most frustrating part of playing this game is seeing how much potential it has (err, had). A 3-D action game with fighting game-style battles sounds so cool in theory but the execution isn't there in Spawn. The graphics are as muddy as a backwoods trail in Washington State, the 3-D fighting engine is stiff and awkward, and the enemy AI just couldn't be more braindead. **Kelly**

I haven't seen many bad third-person games this year, but I knew hell would have to start somewhere. I can't find much good to say about this poorly conceived title. By far my most positive reaction was the awesome chromium cover art; McFarlane knows how to visually please his fans. That in mind, I find it hard to believe he had much to do with the **choppy, pixelated, slow-moving game** his best comic character stars in. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	3	3

TENNIS ARENA



Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Smart Dog
Featured In: *EGM* #101

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Smooth Animation

Worst Feature: Silly Special Moves

www.ubisoft.com

Tennis Arena is a prime example of a solid tennis game that took a little too much liberty with its arcade-ish feel. Now don't get me wrong, I do understand the concept and fun of an arcade-style tennis game, but I feel some of the stuff in this game is just dumb. For example, just about every tennis game I've ever played uses the directional pad to create that extra little bit of "English" on the ball. With Tennis Arena you can use the D-pad if you want, but the effect is very subtle. The main way of swerving the ball in the desired direction is to use the L1 and R1 buttons which I feel is counter-intuitive and complicates things for no reason. To be fair, **you do get used to the control after a while, but if it ain't broke, why fix it?** Problem #2: Each player has their own "Unique Super Special Shot" where you'll see ludicrous things like balls being hit by players' bellybuttons and 360 spins. It all seemed a little cheesy to me. If you get in a long rally, you can either acquire a regular super shot or the USSS. Once you acquire this ability, a star icon is displayed under your player. The problem here is that it can't be turned off, so if you want to play straight tennis sans all the fancy-shmancy gymnastics, you have to run around with a dumb star under your feet. It's too bad, cuz I like the core game but these silly extras just don't cut it for me. **Kelly**

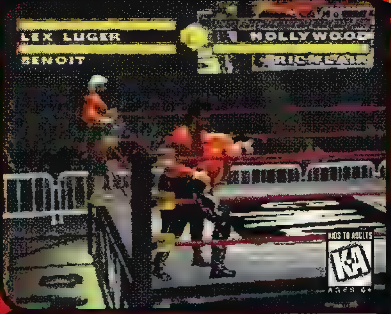
Tennis Arena is a lot of fun. Both modes of play are very well-done (World Tour for one player, and Smash Tennis for multiple players), and are intuitive enough that **both die-hard tennis fans (like Kelly) and non-fans of the sport (like me) can have a good time**. Real players would've been nice, and I would've liked a little bit more control over serving (it's not possible to miss the ball), but otherwise I really have no complaints. Nice game. **John**

The pickins have been slim lately for fans of PlayStation tennis games, so Tennis Arena couldn't have come at a better time. Turns out **the game's pretty solid**. The Multiplayer Modes are a blast (especially when you have four gamers playing doubles), and the super moves add a nice arcade touch to the otherwise realistic action. Control is OK, but I wish I had more control over where my ball landed. Some moves are sluggish, too. **Crispin**

When I read "Your Racket Is Your Only Weapon" on this game's box cover, I knew I was in for an interesting experience. **Ubi Soft must not have thought tennis was an interesting enough sport** in and of itself, because Tennis Arena adds all sorts of goofy things to the sport. Weird characters, exotic courts and power moves are amusing, but also undermine the realism of the game. It's a good meal for starved tennis video game fans. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	7	7

WCW NITRO



Publisher: T•HQ
Developer: Inland Productions
Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Action-Packed

Worst Feature: Some Annoying Slowdown

www.thq.com

Wrestling games usually aren't my cup of tea but the newer games have sparked my interest in the sport. WCW Nitro is one of them. I'm not one to take pro wrestling any more seriously than a form of organized (and sometimes overwrought) entertainment and **this game is a fine (but not outstanding) representative of the "sport."** The graphics are well-done with large wrestlers and a detailed wrestling arena but the action seems to be set too far away. I would've preferred if the viewpoint was up close and personal. I want to see blood flowing and bodies bouncing but that was nowhere to be found in WCW Nitro. For a beginner like me, the controls were simple and intuitive but there seems to be a slight delay with each button press. This doesn't pose as much of a problem in the One-player Mode because the computer AI seems to be kinda dumb, but when playing a real person, it can be really frustrating. Speaking of playing a real person, WCW Nitro is much more fun as a multiplayer game than when playing it alone (surprise). I did notice that the game slows down a tad when four wrestlers are all on screen at the same time. Overall, WCW Nitro is a good, but not great wrestling game. It's not one of those whoop-hollering party games that the better wrestling titles seem to capture, but it won't stink up the place either. **Kelly**

Although it isn't great, this is the best wrestling game I've played on the PlayStation. The action is quick, and the control is intuitive. The 3-D graphics are pretty good, but **when more than two wrestlers are on screen the frame rate gets body slammed**. Such a thing really sours some of the Multiplayer Modes, which are a little skimpy already. Suffice to say, if you want a wrestling game, slim pickins make this the one to get by default. **Kraig**

I've never played a wrestling game that I felt was fast or responsive enough for my liking, but WCW Nitro comes closer than any so far. The graphics and the number of unlockable characters are impressive, but **the fighting engine seems a little lax in that the game can be won with about four moves in all**. Still, I enjoyed it much more than last year's WCW Vs. The World and Power Move Pro Wrestling, so it seems among the forefront of its genre. **Joe**

WCW is another wrestling game, like its N64 cousin, which looks good, has a lot of options and wrestlers and will appeal to fans of the sport. If you're a WCW fan and you own a PS, this is obviously your game. But fandom aside, **what lies beneath the expensive license is a strictly average wrestling game** with a 1P Mode that's not very exciting at all. Playing with friends is certainly better, but unless you're a fan, I'd recommend renting. **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	7

NINTENDO WIRELESS HEADPHONES

EDITORS' CHOICE • ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY
EGM
SILVER

Publisher: Laral Group LLC
Developer: Laral Group LLC
Available For: *Saturn, PlayStation, N64*

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Wire-free Lifestyle

Worst Feature: A Little Snug

www.laral.com

I'll be the first to admit that it seems weird that Nintendo has their name slapped on these headphones, but if you think about it, it makes sense. If you can't afford a big ol' surround sound system and your parents or neighbors complain, these headphones are an inexpensive solution. After using them, I never want to mess around with wires anymore! It is sweet to just sit back wireless, hear the sounds from every game I play and not have to bother anyone around me (except when I would get mad at the game and scream). Plus, the set has two inputs. So not only did I have my systems hooked up to the headphones (through a switcherbox), but I also had my portable walkman jacked in. The infrared unit needs to be plugged into a wall outlet, but has a pretty good range, and for most practical uses, the set should work just fine. The headphones take a couple of AAA batteries which last a good 10-15 hours. **I will say that the headphones themselves are a little snug.** Sure, they're adjustable, but even with that they make my ears a little uncomfortable. The solution is to take a break every couple hours or so. I tried the headphones with a bunch of different games, and they worked great with all of them. They especially kick ass when you use them with a game that has panning stereo sounds. It's like you're really there. **Shawn**

Laral's Nintendo-licensed Wireless Headphone System is a wee bit pricey at $59 (MSRP), but if you're a gamer who's not too concerned about having a sound setup that'll blow your neighbors into the next district, these babies are for you. **The sound is crystal-clear for at least as long as your controller cord will reach (and then some)**, and the unit and headphones are nicely designed and take up little space. Perfect for late-night gaming. **John**

Here's a great solution for those of you who are afraid of waking your folks or roommates during that late-night gaming session. These headphones have excellent clarity and depth, sounding far better than most television speakers. Using these headphones will enhance most of your gaming experiences unless you already own a killer home theater system. Then again, you shouldn't use a 200w bass booster at 4 a.m. **Sushi**

Although I don't particularly need a set of headphones for gameplay in the *EGM* offices (loud game noises are a standard around here), these wireless ones would be just fine and dandy if I did. I gave them a test drive by playing GoldenEye and Madden 64, and **the sound was crystal-clear**. The headphones are a little pricey, but if you're annoying people around you with the television turned up, no price may be too high to pay. **Kraig**

MSRP	DESIGN
$59.95	8

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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

EGM^2

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

et February 1998

games.com

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TOP 10

EDITORS' PICKS OF THE MONTH

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Feb. 1998

OVERALL

Rank	Months	Game
1	NEW	Alundra
2	NEW	Last Bronx
3	3	Diddy Kong Racing
4	2	SF Collection
5	NEW	Monster Rancher
6	NEW	Armored Core
7	NEW	Bomberman 64
8	NEW	Sonic R
9	NEW	Enemy Zero
10	NEW	Robotron 64

PLAYSTATION

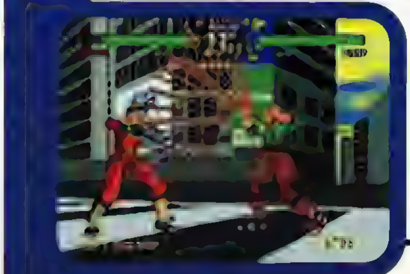
Rank	Months	Game
1	NEW	Alundra
2	NEW	Monster Rancher
3	NEW	Armored Core
4	2	SF Collection
5	2	Tomb Raider 2
6	2	Colony Wars
7	NEW	One
8	2	SF EX Plus α
9	3	NHL 98
10	5	Madden NFL 98

NINTENDO 64

Rank	Months	Game
1	3	Diddy Kong Racing
2	NEW	Bomberman 64
3	NEW	Robotron 64
4	5	GoldenEye 007
5	2	FIFA: RtWC 98
6	4	Madden 64
7	2	Extreme-G
8	12	Mario Kart 64
9	8	Int. Superstar Soccer 64
10	2	Duke Nukem 64

SATURN

Rank	Months	Game
1	NEW	Last Bronx
2	2	SF Collection
3	NEW	Sonic R
4	NEW	Enemy Zero
5	NEW	Steep Slope Sliders
6	4	Madden NFL 98
7	4	Marvel Super Heroes
8	4	Saturn Bomberman
9	NEW	Quake
10	NEW	Sega Touring Car



HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

5 5 Name of Game
Publisher's Name

Editors' Choice Award

# Consecutive Months On The Chart

Rank Number

EGM

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☐ Strategy

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0015

Diddy Kong Racing

By *EGM²*'s Andy Baran

Diddy Kong Racing shares a lot in common with Mario 64 in terms of game structure. You must earn balloons to open up doorways to races, very much like you did with the stars of M64.

There is a number of ways to collect the balloons. The easiest is that there are three balloons hidden on the overworld.

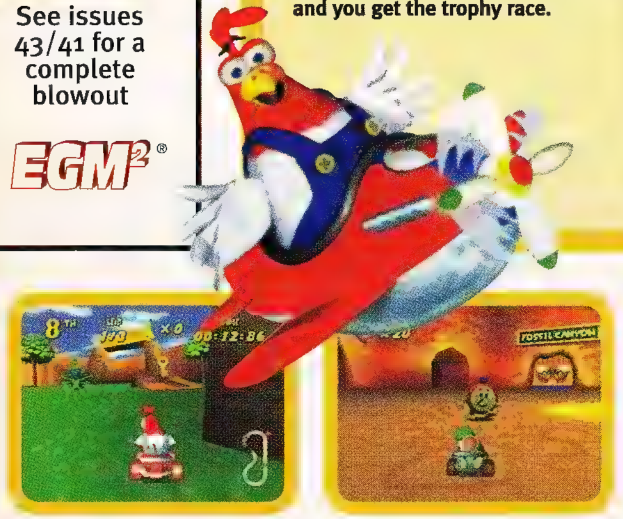
By winning each race, you will receive a balloon. Once you clear all of the races in a world, you will face a Boss. Defeat the Boss and you will get to compete in the Silver Coin Challenge.

By collecting eight silver coins and coming in first place, you will get another set of balloons.

There are many goodies to open up, including bonus rounds and trophy races. Defeat a Boss the second time and you get the trophy race.

See issues 43/41 for a complete blowout

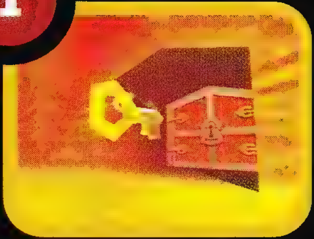
EGM²

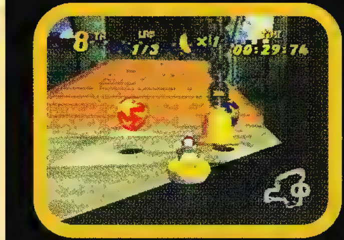


Secret Characters: To play as Drumstick, defeat the first Wizpig. Then look in the overworld for a frog with a chicken head. Hit it to get Drumstick. To play as T.T. the timepiece, you must beat all of his times in the Time Trial Mode.

1

The Hidden Keys





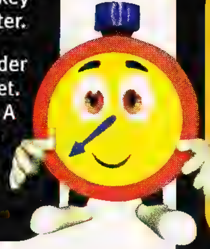
There are four hidden keys strewn about the main levels of the game. To find them you must deviate off the race track and explore. Don't worry, you don't need to win the race. These will open up bonus games.

1. The first key is hidden in the Ancient Lake race. Look along the right side of the race track. It's atop a ramp.

2. Snowball Valley has the second key. Look to the left side of the starting point.

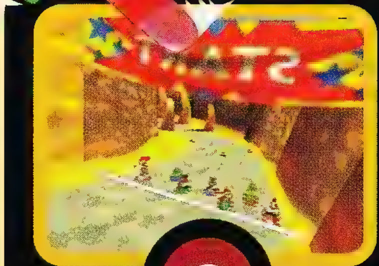
3. Crescent Island harbors a key hidden in an alcove by the water.

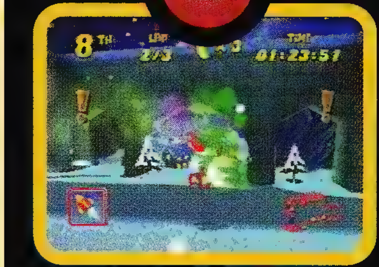
4. The last key is in Boulder Canyon. This one is tough to get. Ring the bell and turn around. A drawbridge will raise. Turbo up the bridge and you will find the key. You must be quick to get this last key.

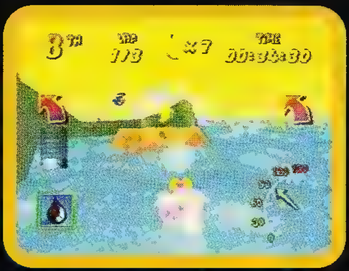


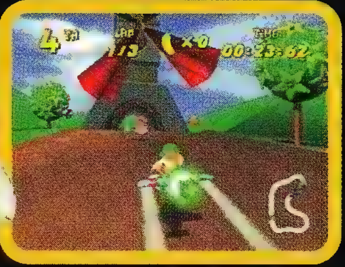
2

The Worlds









Dino Domain

These levels are easy to beat. No real tricks are necessary. To get to the fifth level, you will have to find an extra balloon from somewhere in the overworld.

Quick Tip: Release the accelerator right before a zipper to get an extra boost of speed. This will send you past most opponents.

Snowflake Mountain

Snowflake Mountain really starts getting tough, especially during the Silver Coin Challenge. You will often have to take different paths to get them all. This means you cannot keep using the same shortcut in a level. The best way to find all of the coins is to drive around the level without worrying about winning. Just keep on looking.

Sherbert Island

These levels are tough because of the new choice of craft. Getting used to the hovercraft takes time. A good way to take turns is to take them wide. This way there is no loss of speed. Trying to powerslide like a kart will only slow you down. Jumping and turning in the air works well too, but slows you down slightly.

Dragon Forest

The AI of the computer opponents will really have you pulling out your hair. You must race near flawlessly, and hit almost every zipper. Enjoy the Silver Coin Challenge.

Quick Tip: Need more balloons, challenge Taj with each vehicle.

Weapons & Powering them up

Droppers (green)

These drop a trap behind your vehicle. You should place the trap where you got it to snare opponents.

Rockets (red)

The rockets are the most common pick-up. The best strategy with them is to save up to Level 2. Then your missile will home in on your opponents.

Shields (multi)

Shields are useful when you are in the lead, because the AI will automatically send a load of weapons your way. Ram into baddies to spin them out!

Turbos (blue)

Waiting for an L3 powered turbo can really send you flying past the competition. Try using this right before a zipper to max out your total speed.

Magnets (yellow)

The magnets will pull you up to the next vehicle ahead of you. The higher levels of this power-up have a better range. Be careful about being dragged into the walls by this item.

The Level Bosses

There is a total of five Bosses (*Wizpig has two forms*) in Diddy Kong Racing. These guys will do everything they can to win, including cheat. The best overall strategy to beating them is to use the super-boost at the beginning of the race. This will give you a chance. **Wizpig** is the toughest Boss of all. To beat him the first time around, you must hit every zipper. The second time, you must fly perfectly, or you won't stand a chance. Memorize the tracks and you stand a better chance at winning.

Future Fun Land

Get all of the trophies to beat Wizpig. Then honk your horn at the lighthouse to find a new challenge.

These levels aren't too tough, but you'll have to master your cornering. Use the "R" button in conjunction with the brake for a quick turn.

Secret Turbo Boost: To get a real edge on the competition, you can do a turbo boost at the beginning of the race. To do this, hit the accelerator right as the words "Ready" fade off the screen. There are two levels of boost, dependent on how good your timing is. The blue turbo fire means you had the best timing possible.

Triceratops

Race One: You'll want to use the Secret Boost to get an early lead. Try to stay there. About midway up the track, you'll see a patch of ferns. This is the entrance to a short cut. Save up a turbo for this place.

Race Two: Keep your lead, otherwise this guy will drop obstacles all over the path. If you're caught behind early on, you'll probably lose.

Squid

Race One: This is one of the toughest Bosses around. The squid will drop spikes in your path. You won't have to worry if you are ahead of him though. If caught behind, ride the sandy part near the edge of the track. He doesn't drop much there.

Race Two: This time he drops bubbles. Get caught three times and you have no chance.

Walrus

Race One: This guy is a snap. Don't worry about getting squashed by him, he won't hurt you. Try to take the lead with the hills. A good jump can give you a nice lead.

Race Two: This race is slightly tougher, but as long as you use the hill jumps, you should be able to keep ahead of him. Try not to ride high on the walls. They slow you down.

Dragon

Race One: The dragon isn't too tough to beat. As long as you catch every zipper, you will be able to pass him easily. The problem is that he breaths fire and can catch you from behind. Wait until the third lap, than race ahead.

Race Two: The dragon will breath out huge fireballs in a triangular fashion. Memorize their pattern (it stays the same).

Tricks of the Trade

Trickman Terry is in need of some serious help!

Well, the Trickman finally did it. He got his hair lopped off and went for a new look. Now he's having a difficult time finding his way around the office. His co-workers have to keep kicking him out of their chairs, because Terry can't find his own desk! Well, at least the Trickmeister knows his limitations, so he got a new puppy that he could train to help him open letters. The trouble is, the little pup doesn't have a name, so she won't listen to him until she learns it. Once again, Terry needs your help! Come up with a name for this little black-and-white dog and send it in along with the best of your newest codes and tricks to:

Tricks of the Trade
1920 Highland Avenue, #222
Lombard, IL 60148
or send e-mail to:
tricks@zd.com

Note: The reference guide has been omitted to make room for more tricks. It will return next month.

Win Games and Accessories for your Tricks!

If your trick is selected as the Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by the kind people at InterAct. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. Gaze at the tiny text below, so you can get all the details on the free stuff.

NOTE: If you send your trick by e-mail you must include your real name, address, city, state and zip code.

Contest Rules

1. **No Purchase Necessary** [illegible]

2. **Prizes** [illegible]

3. **Odds of Winning** [illegible]

4. **Eligibility** [illegible]

5. **Winners List** [illegible]

6. **Restrictions** [illegible]

Sponsors [illegible]

Trick of the Month

Colony Wars

CHEAT PASSWORDS

On the Main Menu Screen, go into the Options and then highlight and enter the Password Option. Choose "Enter" and put in one of the codes shown below for various results. The passwords are case sensitive, so enter them exactly as shown:

Hestas*Retort - Infinite Energy
Commander*Jeffer - Access to all levels, missions, acts, movies (at the Main Menu Screen).
Tranquillex - Super-cooled weapons (don't heat up).
Memo*X33RTY - Infinite secondary weapons
All*cheats*off - Turns off all the cheats

Enter Commander*Jeffer to get access to all the levels.

You will receive infinite energy by entering the Hestas*Retort code.

Jason Kanal
Mulberry, FL

Tomb Raider 2

LEVEL SKIP, ALL WEAPONS, EXPLODING LARA, GET RID OF BUTLER

All of these codes must be entered while in the middle of the game. Find a flat surface and follow the movements carefully for each of the tricks listed:

Level Skip - Step Left, Step Right, Step Left, Step Back, Step Forward, Turn around three times and then do a Forward Jump and immediately press the Roll button to get the level end cinema.

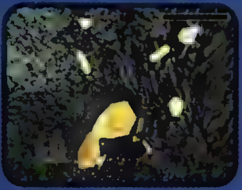
All Weapons - Step Left, Step Right, Step Left, Step Back, Step Forward, Turn around three times and then do a Backward Jump and immediately press the Roll button to get all weapons and plenty of ammo and items in your inventory.

Exploding Lara - Step Left, Step Right, Step Left, Step Forward, Step Back, Turn around three times and then do a Forward Jump and immediately press the Roll button. Lara will explode and you will have to begin the game again.

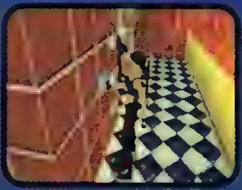
Get Rid of the Butler - Go into the kitchen and open the freezer. When the butler follows you in, jump over him and close the door behind you. He won't be able to get out and you can walk around without the butler following you.

After doing the Level Skip code, you will get the level cinema.

Do the Weapons code to get everything in your inventory.



A funny way to restart your game is to make Lara explode!



Lose the annoying butler by locking him in the freezer!

Time Crisis

USE PEDAL WITH THE GAME

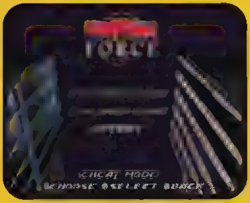
To do this method, you will have to have the Mad Catz steering wheel peripheral. Make sure your GunCon is plugged in port 1 and plug the Mad Catz wheel in port 2. When you begin your game, you can use the pedals included with the wheel to activate the "duck" feature. This will give you more of an arcade feel while playing the game.

Wim de Koning
Holland

Fighting Force

CHEAT MODE

At the Main Menu Screen, press and hold buttons L1, R2, Square, and Left (on the directional pad). Do this until "Cheat Mode" appears under Options. Now go into the Options Screen and you will see that the first two options will now let you select your level and invulnerability!



Press and hold the correct buttons at the Main Menu Screen.

Now go into the Options and you can select two cheats!

Final Fantasy VII

REGENERATE CHOCOBO STAMINA

Here is a trick for Chocobo racing within the game. When racing your Chocobos, hold the R1 and R2 buttons simultaneously and your stamina will regenerate. Even if you speed up your Chocobos, it will increase or stay the same. If you sprint, the bar will drain slower than before.

Peter Land
Waukesha, WI

During a Chocobo race, hold the buttons to get back stamina.

Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Käsi

MANY CHEATS AND HIDDEN CHARACTERS

The following tricks are to be done during the Character Loading Screen and can be done in the Versus and Practice Modes only.

Big Head - Hold the Select button during loading.

Super Deformed - Hold the Select, Down and X keys during loading.

Tiny Mode - Hold Select, Down, X and R2 buttons during loading.

The following characters or arena select features can only be unlocked if "Player Change at Continue" in the Options Menu is set to "No," which is the default setting.

Unlock Darth Vader - Play through Arcade Mode with Luke Skywalker on "Standard" or "Jedi" difficulty.

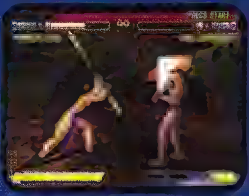
Unlock Stormtrooper - Play through Arcade Mode with Han Solo on "Standard" or "Jedi" difficulty.

Unlock Jodo Kast - Play through and win against seven or more characters in "Survival Mode."

Unlock Slave Leia - Play through Arcade Mode with Princess Leia on "Jedi" difficulty.

Unlock Mara Jade - Hold the L1, L2 and R1 buttons as you enter Team Mode on "Jedi" difficulty. After the computer selects the characters, you will see "Battle for Mara Jade." Win the battle and she will be released.

Unlock the Ability to Select Arenas - (Practice and Arcade only) Play through Arcade Mode with Chewbacca on "Standard" or "Jedi" difficulty.



Slave Leia is just one of the hidden characters in the game!

Duke Nukem 64

MANY CHEATS REVEALED

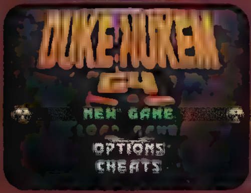
To get these cheats to work, you must first enter the main code: Left, Left, L button, L button, Right, Right, Left, Left. This will open the "Cheats" Menu. After it is entered, put in any one of these codes on the Main Menu Screen for the results shown below:

Invincibility - R button, R button, R button, R button, R button, R button, R button, Left.

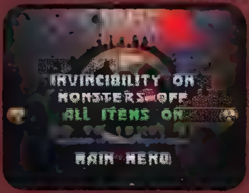
Items On/Off - R button, Right-C, Right, L button, Left-C, Left, Right-C, Right.

Monsters On/Off- L button, Left-C, Left, R button, Right-C, Right, Left, Left, Right.

Benjamin Yavitz
St. Louis, MO



Enter the main code and then the others on the Main Menu.



In Cheats, you can access them! Try to find the Level Select!

Frogger

LEVEL SELECT AND INFINITE LIVES

These tricks will give you some great cheats to help you along in the classic come back to life.

All Zones Open - Pause the game during play and press Right, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, R1, L1, R1, L1, Circle.

Infinite Lives - Pause the game during play and press Right, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, X.

Once you do either of these tricks, you will see the results in text on the bottom of the screen.

ALL ZONES OPEN

Pause in the middle of your game and do the trick.

Once you go back to the Level Menu, all of them will be open!

Moto Racer

MANY CHEATS

These codes are to be entered on the Title Screen (with Start/Options):

View Credits - Press O, T, O, O, T, O, Up, Right, Left, X.

View Victory FMV Sequence - Press O, T, O, T, O, T, L1, Up, R2, X.

Enable All Tracks - Press Up, Up, Left, Right, Down, Down, O, R2, T, X.

Enable All Reversed Tracks - Press Down, Down, Right, Left, Up, Up, O, L2, T, X at the Title Screen.

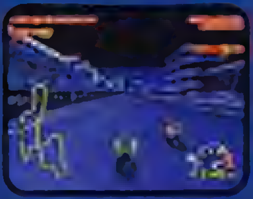
Night Mode - Press Up, O, L1, Down, T, L2, O, Left, R1, X.

Reverse Mode - Press Left, Right, Left, Right, O, O, R1, L1, T, X.

Pocket Bikes - Press Up, Down, R2, L2, Down, Up, L1, X at the Title Screen.

CPU Bikes Only Go 90 km/h - Press Down, Down, Down, O, L1, O, L2, Down, Down, X.

Turbo Boost - Press Up, Up, Up, T, R1, T, R2, Up, Up, X at the Title Screen.



You can combine the different modes to have a wacky race!

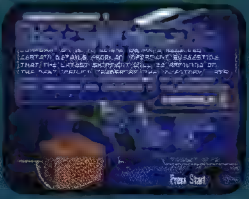
G-Police

WEAPONS, AMMO AND SHIELDS

Unlimited Shields - On the Briefing Screen, hold L1+R2+Square. While holding these, press Left.

All Weapons and Unlimited Ammo - At the Loadout Screen (weapon choice), hold L1+L2,+R1+Circle+Triangle+Square. While holding these, press Left.

Kevin White
Belvidere, IL



At the Briefing Screen, hold the buttons to get unlimited shields.

Do the code at the Loadout Screen for all weapons!

PlayStation Underground No. 4

MANY HIDDEN CODES

Disc 1

Contest - In the Bulletins section, hold Triangle and Circle. While holding them, press Square twice.

New Memory Cartridges - In the Code Archive section, hold Triangle and Circle. While holding them, press Square twice.

Where Are They Now? - In the Event Center, hold Triangle and Circle. While holding them, rapidly press Square.

Parappa Fun Code - On the Main Menu Screen, press Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle.

Disc 2

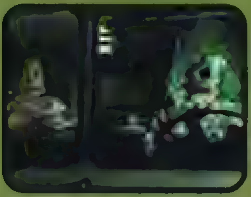
Resident Evil 2 Video - On the Main Screen (with Cardinal SYN showing), press Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle.

Our Lady Peace Video - On the Main Screen (with Cardinal SYN showing), press Circle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Square, Circle.

Twisted Metal 2 Ending - On the Main Screen (with Cardinal SYN showing), hold Circle and Triangle. While holding them, press Square twice.

Cool Boarders 2 Tips - On the Main Screen (with Cardinal SYN showing), press Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Square.

Red Asphalt Codes - On the Main Screen (with Cardinal SYN showing), press Square, Triangle, Square, Circle.



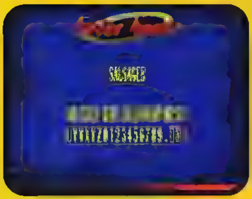
You can see an ending for Twisted Metal that was rare!

Test Drive 4

NEW CARS AND BACKWARD TRACKS

Choose a One-Player Race from the Main Menu and choose a Drag Race from the Race Menu. Now choose a car and win the race. You will set a new record for the race. When the "Race Again" Menu appears, choose "Quit." Now put in your name as KNACKED for backward tracks, or SAUSAGE to get four new cars (GTSR, TVR 12/7, Pitbull Special and a '69 Dodge Daytona)! The new cars and tracks will appear in the Single Race Mode only.

David Howsley
Purcell, OK



Enter your name as Sausage for new cars and Knacked for tracks.

In Single Race Mode, you can race any of the new vehicles!

Monster Rancher

SECRET MONSTER

To do this trick, your breeding status must be in master rank ([illegible]). Note: You must have another game called "Tecmo's Deception" to do this trick. When you are about to breed a monster, put in the Tecmo's Deception game CD and you will get a secret character from that game called Ardebaran when you generate a monster in the shrine! Also, PlayStation and computer data CDs that have one track on them will produce purebred monsters.

Insert the Tecmo's Deception CD in and generate a monster

A character from that game will be the secret monster!

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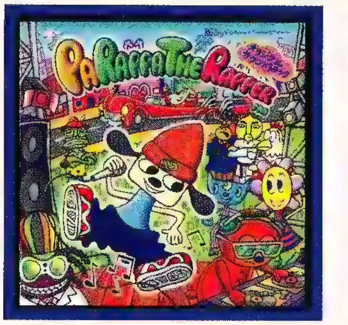
Cool stuff you could probably live without, but shouldn't



V is for Victory

Street Fighter maniacs can now kick back and watch the early adventures of Ken and Ryu as they strive to become the best fighters in the world. Top-notch animation and a wonderfully developed story line highlight this 10-volume set. No, Sheng Long doesn't make an appearance, but look for the hidden Akumas in nearly all 29 action-packed episodes.

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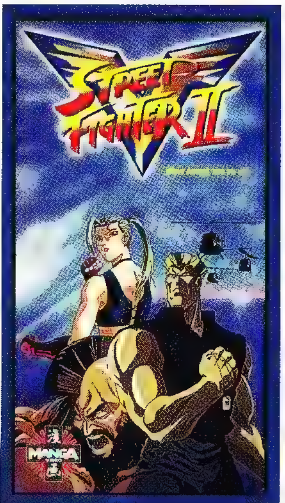

PaRapper's CD

If you got the urge to bust-a-move while playing PaRappa the Rapper, you're not alone. Why, if it weren't for the intensity of the game (it requires all your concentration), we'd all be layin' out the cardboard for some old-school breakin'. Get the soundtrack through this small but friendly importer.

Price $21
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www.book.uci.edu/anime.html
phone (714) 824-2752

PaRappa The Rapper

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No Skip to My Lou

After you get your PaRappa CD, check out the SL-S651C Personal CD Player from Panasonic. It features a 10-second anti-shock memory, so you can skip around like an idiot and not miss a beat! A remote control and illuminated control buttons make this pup a gem of a car CD player.

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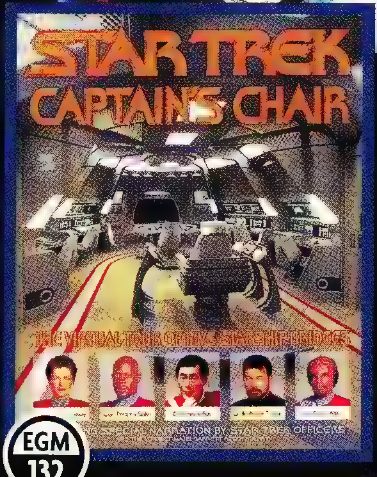
• Corrections from last issue: The ABC Monday Night Football game shown actually costs $149. Miggle Toys does offer more modest models for $69 and $49. Also, the Duke action figure Web site is **www.resaurus.com.**



To Boldly Sit Down...

Why is it that with a cool license like Star Trek the only good games are the multimedia offerings from Simon & Schuster? Star Trek Captain's Chair lets you explore every nook and cranny on the bridge of the Classic Enterprise, Voyager, Defiant—as well as the Next Generation's Enterprise D and E. QuickTime VR technology lets you "walk" wherever you want to go, so you can check out all the cool bridge displays, many of which actually work when activated. Heck, touch the wrong button and you can even auto-destruct the USS Voyager!

Price $39
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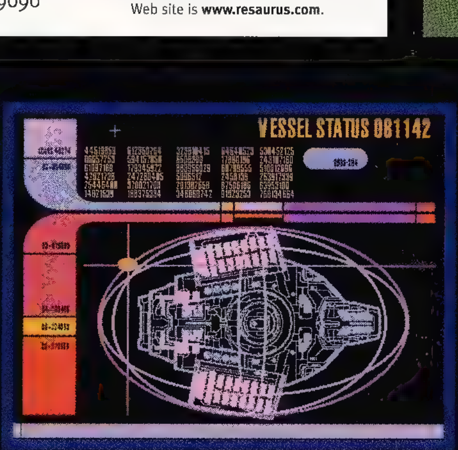


ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY and EGM²

have 3 BONUS magazines coming your way this fall!

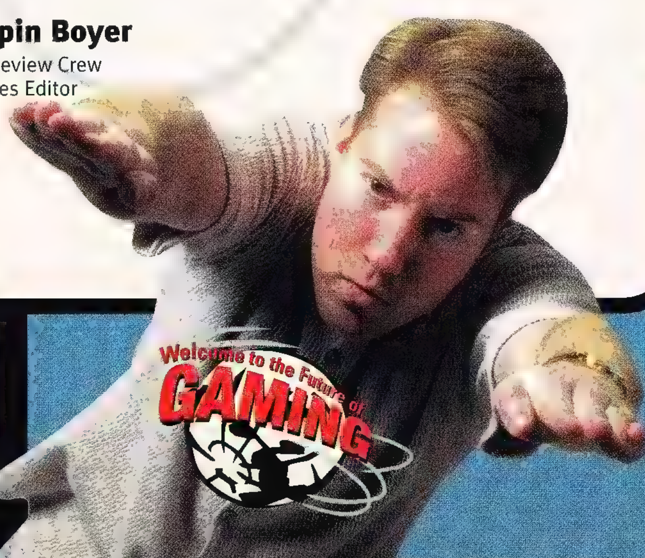
Hey Gamers!
This time of year there are so many cool games coming our way it's hard to find enough space to tell you about 'em all. That's why we have *EGM* and *EGM²* special issues like the ***1998 Video Game Buyer's Guide*, *Guide to Sports Video Games*** and ***Video Games for the Nintendo 64***. Although these mags are created by your favorite *EGM* and *EGM²* editors, they contain lots of information **not found** in the pages of *EGM* and *EGM²*. Let me tell you a little about each...

1998 Video Game Buyer's Guide
Put together by Dan Hsu and the rest of the Review Crew, this mag tells you our pick for this year's best system and which games you should buy! We also have our Good, Bad and Silly look back on the gaming industry, along with a massive trick index and game review chart with over 1,300 games listed and rated! Plus, go behind the scenes with Shigeru Miyamoto on the future of Nintendo, and take a top-secret look at the world of video game-controller design.

Video Games for Nintendo 64
Written by brand-spankin' new Review Crew guy (and Nintendo-book veteran) John Ricciardi, this mag has everything you've ever wanted to know about the N64. It's packed with reviews of all the new N64 games, previews of more than 20 hot new titles, a huge tips-and-tricks section and—best of all—strategy guides for all of your favorite games. John just got back from Japan with the latest Nintendo news, and he's itchin' to unload it all in this special issue.

Sports Video Games
Tired of watching the other team make all the big plays? Want to know which sports games you should even bother playing? *EGM*'s guide will satisfy all of your sports-gaming needs with comprehensive strategies, interviews, in-depth previews and a hard-hitting review lineup of the ultimate sports titles. Watch for the huge Madden 64 behind-the-scenes blowout and an interview with legendary Q-back Brett Favre. *EGM*'s armchair jock Kraig Kujawa is writing this sucker, which focuses mainly on football, basketball and hockey titles. Watch for it!

Crispin Boyer
EGM Review Crew
Features Editor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1998 VIDEO GAME BUYER'S GUIDE

On Sale Nov. 11, 1997

VIDEO GAMES FOR THE NINTENDO 64

Volume 3

On Sale Nov. 25, 1997

SPORTS VIDEO GAMES

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OP:ed

by Ed Semrad
ed_semrad@zd.com

EGM's own gaming guru shoots from the hip

Looking down the barrel of a machine gun is a memory a person doesn't quickly forget.

Remember the live CNN coverage of the Gulf War from inside Iraq? Journalists sometimes have to go to dangerous areas to cover a story. Fortunately, video games are a rather "safe" industry to cover.

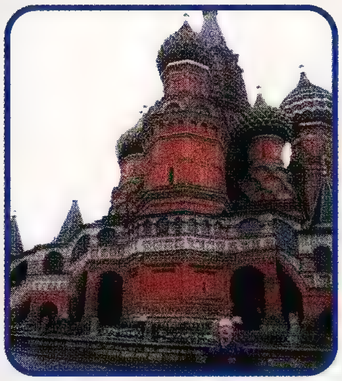
Until now.

For the past couple of months I have been traveling around the world gathering information for a story I am working on. I was able to go to a couple dozen countries including Russia and China, and to get the details, I had to go beyond the normal tourist sites. That's where things really got interesting.

First, there was Russia. I always have had uncanny luck of being in the right spot at the right time. I got there just when they were celebrating the 85th anniversary of the Russian revolution. I was among the crowds in Red Square taking pictures when a soldier came and stood next to me. I left a few minutes later. So did he. Where I went, he went and that continued all day. I'd go in a store, so would he. It wasn't until that evening when he finally left me alone.

But that was nothing compared to my China experience. Again, as luck would have it, there was quite an event going on in Tiananmen Square, and I joined the crowd to watch. Apparently the prime minister of Russia was getting a tour of the city with the prime minister of China and security was tight. Well, there I was, standing a foot taller than the crowd, taking pictures. Up come three Chinese soldiers, who proceed to grab me and pull me off to their car. All the time they were yelling something in Chinese and one soldier had a machine gun aimed at me. Needless to say, I just froze. Minutes (which seemed like hours) went by and nothing got resolved. They knew as much English as I knew Chinese. Finally I gave them my passport and business card and then showed them a copy of the magazine. I could see that they didn't understand anything, but they must have realized that I was harmless, and after a few more minutes, they let me go. Still, the memory of looking down the barrel of a machine gun is one I won't soon forget.

Sweden, Germany, France and Spain went as they should—uneventful. Then there was Italy. Rome is a city where a person should never attempt to drive. The cabs and motorscooters are everywhere, and people drive like there is no tomorrow. It should be no surprise that my cab driver got into an accident. Nothing major, but I still get headaches from when my head hit the window.



Finally there was Brazil. The problems started when the customs agent asked where my entry visa was (my travel agent didn't get me one). He took me to a small holding cell which had a chair, a table and a two-way mirror. The police took my passport, money and plane ticket and left. Later I asked if I could call the U.S. Embassy and they said no. So much for the right to make a phone call. An hour later nothing was resolved and I finally suggested to them that I could take the next plane out of the country. Any place would be better than jail (where they wanted me). Fortunately the airline finally came to my rescue, switched my flights and the Brazilian police escorted me up to the plane.

CNN, I'm now ready for an assignment in Iraq. Covering video games is becoming too dangerous.

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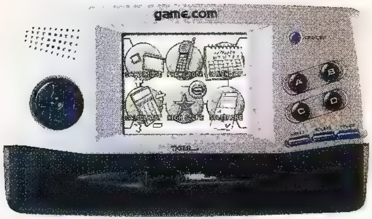

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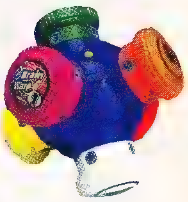

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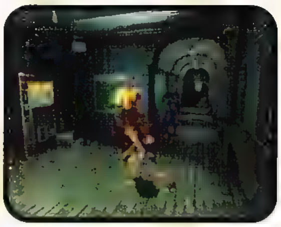
Next Month

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY™

March 1998

The only event bigger than the Oscars, or the Super Bowl—The *EGM* Editors' Choice Awards.



Resident Evil 2 is an eagerly anticipated sequel. Does it live up to expectations?

The year 1997 was a great time for next-generation gaming. Now that the last games of '97 have arrived, dress up in your tux, because it's time for the 1997 *EGM* Editors' Choice and Reader Awards. We're sure you can guess some of the obvious winners, but there will be a few surprises.

The next few months promise to be landmark ones for gaming. Kicking off the tidal wave is Resident Evil 2, which we will review, in addition to major coverage of the N64's Yoshi's Story. Also look for reviews of NBA In the Zone '98, Nagano Winter Olympics (N64/PS) and Winter Heat (SAT).

Yoshi's Story has been causing our editors to drool for months. Finally, we get our hands on the popular dino.

EGM²®

If you can't get Lara to the next level, she might not be "just another pretty face."

Travel through time and even hell to obtain the keys to the Tower of Hell while beatin' up your foes!

February 1998

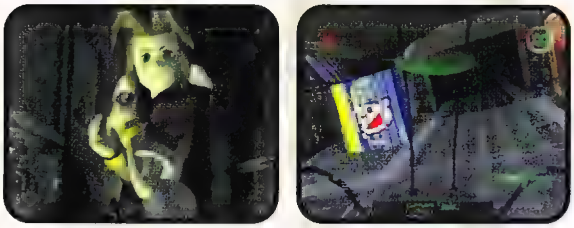
Check out the first-ever hands-on strategy guide available for Resident Evil 2—and learn the ins and outs of this "killer" title.

Mr. Groundhog won't be popping his head out all too soon because *EGM²* has a fantastic lineup of strategy guides next month.

Starting with our second part to the Tomb Raider 2 guide, we left off with Lara dangling from a cliff...OK, maybe not. But we do show you how to conquer the next couple of levels and Bosses.

Next, the zombies are on the loose in Raccoon City, and without our help, you could be zombie chow. Learn all the ins and outs of the sequel to Resident Evil.

Plus, it will be a good day in hell if you use our Spawn strategy in next month's issue!



You can cut the tension with a knife! What will the game of the year be?

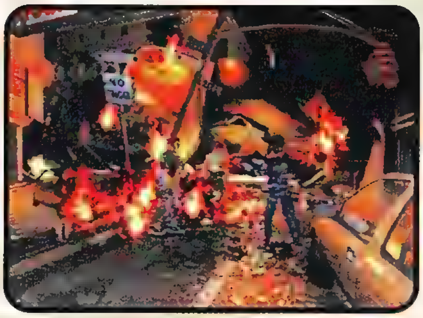
Official U.S. PlayStation™ Magazine

February 1998

It's finally here! February will see the first annual *OPM* Editors' awards. What will be chosen as the Game of the Year? What were the standouts that will receive honorable mentions? Will Joe Rybicki's New Year's resolution be regrowing his flowing mane? All these questions and more will be answered in February.

Continuing our coverage on maximizing your PlayStation, CFG Lab's president Brent Butterworth tells you how to calibrate your television! Of course, the issue will still be packed with the latest info about all things PlayStation. Be there!

We'll have the latest previews and reviews as well as the latest installment of the OPM Demo CD!



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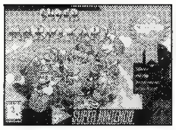

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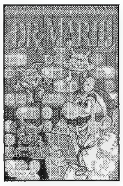

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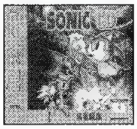

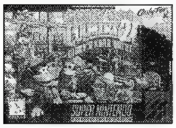

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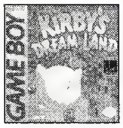

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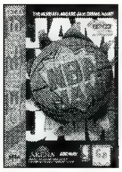

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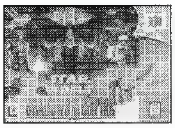

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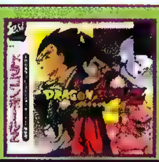
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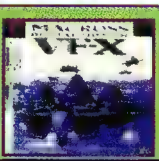
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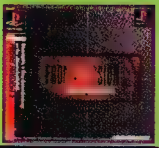
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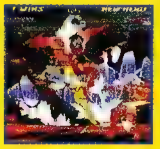
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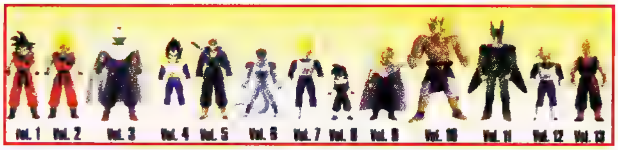

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Mystery Word Grid

	H				___	M
		E			___	Y
P	I	N	C	H	W	S
	R				___	T
S					___	E
						R
						Y
						W
						O
						R
						D

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH .....W	PRESS ....K	BLAST ......A	WRECK .....D
BREAK ......Z	PUNCH .....S	SPRAY C	TURBO V
STOMP .....T	STAND ......R	PRESS ....E	DREAM ....O
CRUSH I	SCORE .....H	SLANT L	CHASE......P

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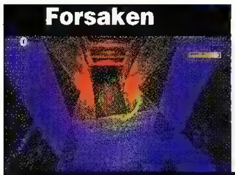
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Robotech

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Earthworm Jim 3D
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Sonic R

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Grandia
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Sonic R

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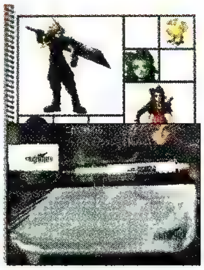
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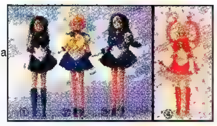

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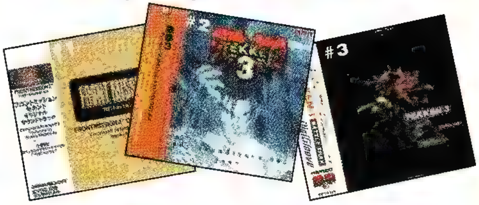

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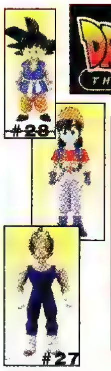

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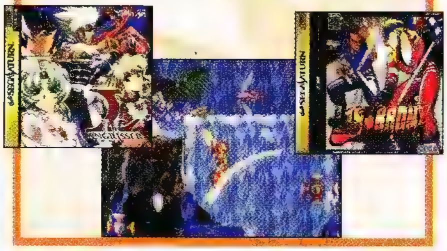

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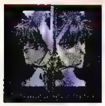
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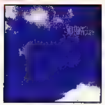
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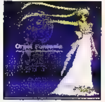
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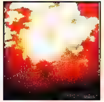
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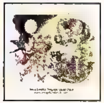
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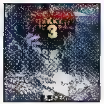
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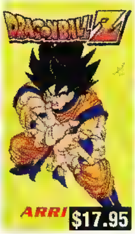
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